THE WAY TO THE Higheſt Honour.

A FUNERAL SERMON, On *JOHN* xii. 26.

Preach'd upon the Deceaſe of the Rnd *THO. JACOMB*, D.D. *April* 3. 1687.

By *William Bates*, D.D.

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TO THE

Right Honourable

ELIZABETH

Counteſs-Dowager

OF

EXCETER.

Madam,

I *Preſent a Sermon to your view, that drew forth your Tears in the Hearing, and is like to be a revival of your Sorrow in Reading; but I could not without Indecence decline the inſcribing it to your Name. 'Tis deſign'd to the precious Memory of one, whoſe Piety and Prudence had render'd moſt worthily and affectionately*

onately reſpected by you: One who for Forty Years faithfully ſerved you in the Affairs of your Soul, and in that long ſpace there was a continual Circulation of Favours on your Part, and Obſervance on his. As his Preſence and Counſel, and Example in your Family was an excellent Bleſſing and dearly prized by you, ſo in proportion your afflicting Grief riſes for the loſs of him. But you are inſtructed to be content with the Divine Diſpoſal: And our Gracious God by withdrawing intermediate Comforts, calls you to more intimate and Heavenly Communion with Himſelf.

I might here take a juſt occaſion to ſpeak of your eminent Vertues, and of your ſerious Religi-

on

on that crowns the reſt: For then Praiſe-worthy Excellencies may be duely and ſafely repreſented, when he that Commends is not in danger of falling into Flattery, and the Perſon Commended is not in danger of being ſwell'd with Pride: And ſuch is your excellent and conſpicuous Goodneſs, that it reflects a Luſtre upon your Nobility, and is above Verbal Encomiums; and your rare Humility is moſt relucent amongſt your other ſhining Graces. But 'tis needleſs to illuſtrate that Worth that is ſo viſible to all.

I ſhall only obſerve, that as you have been ſo happy as to find Wiſdom, *the true Spiritual Wiſdom that directs us to our Laſt and Bleſſed End, the* Wiſdom that

that excells Rubies, *and by an incomparable Compariſon all the admired Things in the World: So the promiſed Reward of Wiſdom has been your Portion:* Length of Days are in her right Hand, and in her left Hand Wiſdom and Honour. *You are now come to Old Age, and are apt to complain (ſuch is your zealous Piety) that, your Strength being ſpent, you are uſeleſs, and with Impatience deſire a Diſmiſſion from hence. But as a Servant that ſtands and waits upon his Maſter's Pleaſure, as truly ſerves him, as he that is moſt induſtrious in his Buſineſs; ſo by an humble patient waiting upon your Heavenly Lord, till he ſhall call you to the Bleſſed State Above, you as truly pleaſe and*

glorifie

glorifie him, as when your active powers were fresh and lively, and you went about doing good.

Be encouraged, Good Madam, with unfainting Perseverance to expect the final Reward: For your Salvation is nearer than when you first believed. *Let the Love of Christ always reign in your Heart, and the Crown of Glory be always in your Eye, that you may finish your course with joy. These are the most unfeigned Desires of him who is,*

Madam,

Your very humble and
faithful Servant,

William Bates.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

A Short Description of the Blessed Place and State of the Saints Above. In a Discourse on the Words of our Saviour, *Joh.* 14. 2. Preached on occasion of the Death of Mr. *David Clarkson.* By *W. Bates*, D. D.

A Plain Representation of Transubstantiation, as it is received in the Church of *Rome*, with the Sandy Foundations it is built upon, and the Arguments that clearly evert and overturn it.

ERRATA.

PAg. 29. in the Margent, for σκυδὶς r. σκυθὶς. P. 102. l. 6. for *ruines* r. *ruin'd*. P. 104. l. 11. dele *our selves*.

St. JOHN

St. JOHN xii. 26.

If any Man ſerve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there ſhall alſo my Servant be: If any Man ſerve me, him will my Father honour.

IF it ſo pleaſed the wiſe and ſoveraign Diſpoſer of all Things, how much rather would I be an attentive Hearer of that bleſſed Servant of God who is now above, than preach his Funeral Sermon at this Time. That my ſad Voice ſhould be reſerved for this mournful Service, is both contrary to my Deſire and Expectation. O frail and faithleſs Life of Man! Who would have thought that Dr. *Jacomb*, whoſe natural vigour and firm Complexion promiſed a

longer continuance here, ſhould have a period put to his Days, and that I ſhould ſurvive, whoſe Life has been preſerved for many Years like the weak light of a Lamp in the open Air? But he has finiſh'd his Work, and was more fit for Heaven: The laſt Lord's Day he entred into everlaſting Reſt: And I with you are ſtill upon the Earth, that we may make a better Preparation for the Divine Preſence in Heaven, and that Holy Aſſembly that ſerves him who ſits upon the Throne without Imperfection or Intermiſſion for ever. In order to this end, I have choſen the preſent Subject of my Diſcourſe.

In the Verſe our Saviour gives a moſt important Command and indiſpenſably obligatory to all Chriſtians; *If any Man ſerves me, let him follow me:* If he aſſumes the Title, and enters into the ſacred Engagement of being my Ser-

Servant, let his Carriage be answerable to his Condition, let him follow the Divine Example I have set before him. And since the way is narrow and be-set with Thorns, our Cœlestial Leader who by the Cross ascended to the Throne, assures us of a blessed Retribution that shall infinitely out-weigh all the numerous and heavy Troubles to which we are expos'd in his Service; all our grievous Sufferings shall end in Eternal Joys: *Where I am, there shall my Servant be:* And he is at *God's right Hand, where there is fulness of Joy, and Rivers of Pleasure for ever.* And all the Clouds of Disgrace and Contempt that darken our present State, shall be dispell'd and overcome by unfading Glory: *If any Man serve me, him will my Father honour.*

Joy and Glory are the bright Sum of Heaven: The compleat Felicity that a stedfast Faith in

our Saviour's Promiſes, oppoſes to the greateſt Evils, all the Ignominy and Reproaches, all the Pains and Miſeries that can afflict Life, or imbitter Death: The lively hope of it inſpires his Servants with an invincible Courage and Patience to ſuſtain what ever Evils for his Sake.

I ſhall confine my Diſcourſe to the laſt part of the Verſe; *If any Man ſerve me, him will my Father honour:* Having upon the like occaſion treated of the Joy that ſhall recompence all the Sorrows and Labours of the Saints.

The Propoſition I ſhall inſiſt on is this: *God will crown the Fidelity and Conſtancy of Chriſt's Servants with the higheſt Honour.*

In the managing of the Point, I will conſider,

Firſt,

Firſt, What the Service of Chriſt implies.

Secondly, Upon what accounts 'tis due to him.

Thirdly, The final Reward that ſhall certainly attend it.

Laſtly, Bring it home to our own Boſoms by Application.

Firſt, What the Service of Chriſt implies. In the general Notion, to ſerve Chriſt, implies Obedience to his Will as the Rule of our Actions, with aims at his Glory as the End of them. His Will revealed in the Scriptures is a Rule eminently and excluſively. Eminently, for it has all the Perfections of a Rule: 'Tis clear and compleat, ſufficient *to make us wiſe to Salvation*, and to direct us in *the Way everlaſting*. 'Tis called the *holy, acceptable, and perfect Will of God*. 'Tis a Rule Excluſively. To ſpeak ſtrictly, no Creature can

be a Rule to another; for they are all in an equal Line of Subjection to the Creator: One may be a Guide or Governour to another according to the Rule of God's Word. The Laws of Men cannot reach and bind the Conscience immediately, but by virtue of God's Command; nor unlimitedly, but as they are consonant with his Laws. Now a universal respect to the Will of Christ, as the Rule of our Lives, is truly to serve him. And the aiming at his Glory in all our Desires and Endeavours, either actually or habitually, is an essential Ingredient in his Service. The actual Intention in every performance is not absolutely necessary: Many good Actions may proceed from the Influence of the habitual Intention: An Arrow that is directed by aim may hit the Mark, tho in its flight the Eye be turned off from it. But the ultimate

scope

ſcope of our Life, which ought to be often renewed in our Minds, muſt be to pleaſe and glorify Chriſt; according to the Apoſtle's Expreſſion, *To me to live is Chriſt.* I will more diſtinctly open theſe Things under the following Heads;

1. The Church is a diſtinct Society from the World, of which Chriſt is the Head; and the State of Chriſtianity is *a high and holy Calling*; and all who are brought into it by the outward Miniſtry of the Word, or in Conjunction with it, by the internal Grace of the Spirit, are obliged to the Faith and Obedience of the Goſpel; the ſame Duties and the ſame Rewards are common to all: And living according to that Spiritual State in *Godlineſs, Righteouſneſs, and Sobriety*, is to ſerve Chriſt. Thus the Adoration, the Honour, the Homage we render to God, the making him the ſole Object of

our higheſt Love, an entire relyance on the Mediator for our Salvation, an earneſt deſire to pleaſe him in all Things, and an equal fear to diſpleaſe him, the exerciſe of compaſſionate beneficent Charity towards Men; briefly, a Holy and Heavenly Converſation, is the univerſal Duty of Chriſt's Servants. And that our Service be accepted, it muſt be performed with Humility, Zeal and Conſtancy.

With Humility and Dependance upon the Mediator for Divine Grace and Acceptance. Every ſpiritual Act requires a Supernatural Power: Not a holy Thought or Word ſprings from naked Nature. Our Saviour tells his Diſciples, *Without me you can do nothing*. As the Branches derive Life and active Sap from the Root that makes them flouriſhing and fruitful; ſo from his ſanctifying Spirit, (that was purchaſed by

by his meritorious Sufferings, and is conferr'd by him in his Glory,) we are made fruitful in every good Work: And in the *beloved Son* we *are only accepted.*

This general Service due to Chriſt, muſt be done with Zeal. We are commanded to be *fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord*; to *work out our own Salvation*, as the Apoſtle with moſt lively Emphaſis enforces the Duty. Our moſt ardent Affections and active Powers are to be imploy'd in this work, remembring that our Lives are ſhort and uncertain: Time flies upon the ſwifteſt Wings: That the Work is of infinite and everlaſting Conſequence, in compariſon of which our fervent Diligence in worldly Affairs, is like the throwing of Straws and Feathers with our utmoſt ſtrength: remembring, that we are always under the pure Eye of our Divine Maſter, that will call us to an exact Ac-

Rom. 12. 11.

Account. To be cold and careleſs in his Service, diſparages his Excellency, and will defeat our hopes: *The Kingdom of Heaven is taken by violence.*

Luke 1.74,75. With Conſtancy. *He delivered us from the Hands of our Enemies, that we might ſerve him without Fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs before him all the Days of our Lives.* The travail of Faith continues till heavenly Viſion be brought forth, and the Labour of Love till the Reward be obtained. I will not inſiſt on this, being to reſume the conſideration of it afterwards.

2. In the various Conditions of Life in this World, we are to ſerve Chriſt. The entire Man is the Object of God's tender Care and Providence, and accordingly he has wiſely ordered divers Conditions, and ſpecial Callings of Men, wherein they are engaged, and employed for the Support and Com-

Comfort of themſelves, and the publick Good. And as in a Circle, from every Point of it, a ſtreight Line may be drawn to the Centre: ſo in the vaſt Sphere of this World, from every lawful Calling there may be a direct proſecution of our laſt and bleſſed End, the Glory of God in conjunction with our Salvation.

There is no ſtate of Life ſo low and mean, but a Chriſtian may ſo manage it, as to excel in Holineſs, and conſequently Honour Chriſt: As *Phidias* that famous Sculptor expres'd his Art to Admiration, not only in Gold, and Marble, and Ivory, but in mean Materials, in Wood or ordinary Stone. The Apoſtle often inculcates this Leſſon upon Servants, to obey their Maſters with Fidelity and Cheerfulneſs, *for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt*; *Col.* 3. 24. *Eph.* 6. 7. It was to a mortal Man, and if it might be of a perverſe hu-

Et ſi adhuc viliorum materiarum obtuliſſes, feciſſet quod ex illa fieri optimum poſſit. Sic ſapiens virtutem ſi licebit, in divitiis explicabit, ſi minus, in exilio. Quamcunque fortunam acceperit, aliquid ex illa memorabile efficiet. *Senec. Ep.* 78.

humour, their Service was immediately addres'd; but if from Conſcience of their Duty to Chriſt, and a direct intention to pleaſe him, they performed it, that Reſpect ſweetened and ennobled the Service. 'Tis the Spirit and Perfection of Chriſtianity to transform and elevate the loweſt Actions: it makes the Service of a Slave to be Divine Obedience, which is the moſt free and noble Act of the reaſonable Creature. From hence the ſame Apoſtle enforces the Duties of Servants, that they *may adorn the Goſpel of God our Saviour:* The faithful Diſcharge of their Service redoubles the Luſtre of the glorious Goſpel, and recommended it to their Pagan Maſters. And 'tis equally true, that in every lawful Condition of Life, when Men are converſant in the Duties proper to it, with a reſpect to the Command of Chriſt, when their civil Actions,

Tit. 2.

ons are ultimately resolved into his Glory, they perform Religious Obedience. This is enjoyned in that comprehensive Precept, *Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do it in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ*: that is, with a respect to his Will, and for his Honour. I shall only add that Diligence in our civil Callings, must always be in Subserviency to the great End of our general Calling, the Salvation of our Souls; to which we are primarily and indispensably obliged. The Life of a Christian is a walking with God, and the way is in the performance of holy and civil Duties. And as Companions in a Journey are together all day, but have set times of refreshing themselves; so a Christian in his cœlestial Journey, is to walk always before God uprightly, in all temporal Affairs to regard his Presence, and every day at set times

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to draw near to him by Prayer and Thanksgiving, and to repreſent his Greatneſs and Glory in ſo ſolemn a manner, that there may be a ſerious habitual Conſtitution of Spirit reſpecting him in all his Actions. If there be a neglect of heavenly Communion with him, and of our ſpiritual State, and a perpetual Conſumption of our Thoughts, Time, and Strength for ſecular Advantages and Intereſts, Men are Slaves of the World, not Servants of Chriſt.

3. The Service of Chriſt is more eminently performed in ſome ſpecial Offices ordained for the Glory of God and the publick Good. And ſuch are the civil Magiſtracy, and the ſpiritual Miniſtry.

1. Magiſtrates the higheſt and ſubordinate in the Scale of Government, are by deſignation to their Office to ſerve him, They

are called the Miniſters of God, for the good of the People. Princes may be conſidered in a double Capacity, as Chriſtians, and as Princes, and in both they are obliged to ſerve Chriſt. As Chriſtians, by an inflexible neceſſity, without Priviledg or Diſpenſation they are bound to obey his holy Laws as ſtrictly as every private Perſon; as Princes, they are ſubject to him not only upon the account of his Deity ſimply conſidered, but his Office as Mediator. In his mortal State he did not exerciſe Regal Power, nor appeared with conſpicuous marks of Royalty, for it was incongruous to his End: The Redemption of the loſt World was to be obtained by Sufferings: But his Supremacy over the World, is a Prerogative annext to his being Head of the Church, a Title that infinitely tranſcends all Angelical, much more Human Principalities. Rom. 13.

palities. *He is ſtiled the Prince of the Kings of the Earth.* Princes are commanded *to kiſs the Son*, a Token of the Adoration, and Homage they owe to him. As Princes, they are to exerciſe their Power and Authority to repreſs Wickedneſs, and preſerve the publick Tranquillity: For without the reſtraints of Fear, the moſt ſavage fierce Beaſts would be leſs dangerous than Men to Men. They are to encourage Moral Goodneſs, and not only to promote the civil Proſperity, but eternal Felicity of their Subjects. Accordingly the Apoſtle exhorts Chriſtians to *offer up Prayers and Supplications for Kings, and all in in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godlineſs and Honeſty.* When Princes are inſpired with Sentiments and Reſolutions, becoming their Lieutenancy to the Lord Chriſt, when they govern their Greatneſs,

neſs, and employ their Power in ſubſerviency to his Intereſt, when they protect and encourage all that *ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteouſneſs thereof*, as the clear direct way that leads to it, they ſhall obtain the brighteſt richeſt Crowns in the State of Glory: But thoſe who are a Terror to the Good, and encourage evil Doers, their mighty aggravated Sins will ſink them into the deepeſt Damnation.

2. Thoſe who are conſecrated to the Spiritual Function of teaching, and governing the Church, are in a peculiar manner the Servants of Chriſt, not as he is the Lord of the Earth, but of Heaven; conſidering the Quality of their work and the End of it: For 'tis wholly converſant about the Souls of Men, *to open their Eyes, and turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God, that they may receive* Acts 26. 18.

forgiveneſs of Sins, and inheritance amongſt them which are ſanctified by Faith that is in Chriſt: And as 'tis expreſs'd in other Words of Scripture, *to tranſlate them from the Kingdom of Darkneſs, into the Kingdom of his dear Son.*

Col. 1. 12.

This Relation extends it ſelf from the higheſt Apoſtle to the loweſt in the ſacred Office: St. *Paul* frequently ſtiles himſelf the *Servant of Chriſt*: and by that Title he expreſſes any that are by office employed for the ſaving of Souls: *The Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle to all Men, apt to teach.* As Chriſt is called *the Servant of God* by way of Eminency, and *was anointed to to preach the Goſpel*; ſo thoſe who are dedicated to that Work, are his Servants in the moſt proper ſenſe, and are to follow him, the moſt excellent Example, and higheſt Maſter in that Divine Work. This I will more particularly

Rom. 1.
Phil. 1.

2 Tim. 2.14.

cularly inſiſt upon, being ſuitable to the preſent occaſion, and lay down ſome Rules directing how the Miniſters of Chriſt may ſerve him acceptably, ſo as to be rewarded in the Heavenly Glory.

1. They muſt by ſerious ſtudy furniſh themſelves with Divine Knowledg, and ſubſtantial Learning, for the Diſcharge of all the parts of their Office: To inſtruct the Ignorant, to refute the Erroneous, to reform the Unholy, and to comfort the Humble and Diſconſolate. Our Saviour compares the Miniſters of the Goſpel *unto a Man that is an Houſholder, which brings forth out of his Treaſure, things new and old*; 'Tis his Duty *to give to the Flock Meat in due ſeaſon*, for which not only Fidelity but Wiſdom is requiſite. 'Tis the Apoſtle's charge to *Timothy*; *Give attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine; meditate*

Mat. 13. 52.

Mat. 24. 45.

1 Tim. 4. 14, 15.

ditate on these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear before all. If *Timothy* who had supernatural Gifts by Inspiration, was obliged to be intent and diligent in the application of his mind to the Mysteries of Godliness; how much more should those who must acquire Knowledg by search and Industry, and the Divine Blessing upon it. As Fountains by secret Passages derive from the Sea the Waters that flow in their Streams; so Ministers by reading and Contemplation, and Prayer in their Retirements, obtain the Knowledg of Divine Things, which they convey in their Sermons to the People.

With the Notional, an Experimental Knowledg of Divine Truths, is absolutely necessary to a Minister to save himself, and most useful to save others.

'Tis not a perfect Systeme of Di-

Divinity in the Head, not an univerſal knowledg of ſpiritual Things confined to the Brain, that has a ſaving Efficacy: 'Tis not compoſing a Sermon with exquiſite Art, and the delivering of it like an Orator, that makes him accepted with God. For without a cordial Senſe of Divine Truths, he only lends his Tongue in that holy Service; like a Reciter in a Scene, all he does is but external Appearance. God ſees and requires the Heart: without it neither the Head nor the Tongue of a Miniſter, tho his Speculations are ſublime, and his Words Drops of Gold, are of any value. And uſually the Sermons of ſuch are without profit to the Hearers. The ſound of words only reaches the Ear, 'tis the Mind convinces the Mind, and the Heart perſwades the Heart. He that is ſtrongly convinc'd of the Truth of eternal Things, he will

ſpeak of them with aſſurance, as an Eye witneſs, and in a lively manner: He that is burning in his own Breaſt, will inflame others; but if there be no Spark of Celeſtial Fire in the Miniſter's Breſt, if he does not value the Conſequence of Divine Truths, he ſpeaks of them without a deep concernment; and a cold Preacher makes a careleſs Hearer: and the Sermon is loſt in the Air between the Lips of the one and the Ears of the other.

2. The Matter of their Sermons muſt be the Doctrine of the Goſpel revealed from Heaven to reduce Men to their Duty, and reſtore them to Felicity. This is the Tenor of the Commiſſion given by our Saviour to his Apoſtles, *Go teach all Nations, to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you.* The preaching unrevealed or trivial things, impertinent to the Salvation and

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Perfection of Souls, is directly contrary to the end of their Office. The wiſeſt Method of recovering loſt Sinners is to unfold the two Covenants, and repreſent the two Worlds to them. The firſt Covenant was with Man created in natural Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, but was of a ſhort continuance: For by his rebellious Sin he made a deadly forfeiture of the Image and Favour of God, of Communion with him the Fountain of our Felicity. He is cut off from that bleſſed Life, and muſt remain in the ſtate of Corruption and Death for ever without redeeming Mercy. 'Tis a neceſſary preparative for the Converſion and Recovery of Sinners, to convince them of the guilt, pollution, and dominion of Sin, and the everlaſting Hell that follows it, that they may be rouſed out of their Security *to fly from the Wrath to come.* The Terrors of

the Lord make the first Breach into the Hearts of Men, and Grace victoriously enters, and subdues the reluctant Will. After the Conviction of Sin, 'tis seasonable to convince them of the all-sufficient Righteousness of Christ; that he is the Tree of Life, for the reviving dead Sinners, that he is Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, a universal Remedy for all the Evils that lie upon Man in his fallen State. And 'tis requisite to open the Terms upon which God offers his Mercy, the Law of Faith in the Gospel, that consists of *Commands and Promises*, both to check Presumption that flatters so many into Hell, and to prevent Despair that works as dangerously, though not so frequently, to the Ruin of Souls. That men may not from corrupt minds and carnal Affections misinterpret the Gospel, to live at ease in their

their Sins, a faithful Miniſter muſt ſhew them, that the Promiſes of Pardon and Salvation are made only to a certain order of Sinners, the repenting and reforming Sinners, that rely upon Chriſt alone for their acceptance; that he is a King as well as a Prieſt, and none can regularly depend upon his Sacrifice without Subjection to his Scepter: In ſhort the ſoveraign Balm of his Blood is to be applied only to thoſe whoſe Hearts are broken for their Sins, and from them. And to raiſe and encourage drooping Spirits that feel the intolerable Burthen of Sin, and both from their Guilt and Unworthineſs, and their Impotency to perform the Conditions of the Goſpel, are apt to be hopeleſs of obtaining Salvation, the Goſpel aſſures us that God is rich in Mercy, ready to receive humble contrite Suppliants: That although Sins

Sins are of different degrees of Guilt, and accordingly Conſcience ſhould be affected, and the Springs of Godly Sorrow be opened, yet God can as eaſily forgive ten thouſand Talents as a few pence: that the Blood of Chriſt cleanſes from all Sins, thoſe that are of a Crimſon dy, as well as from thoſe of a lighter Tincture: That the Promiſe of Pardon is without limitation to all penitent Believers. And although in the fallen State Man is deſtitute of Spiritual Strength, *no Man can come to Chriſt except the Father draw him*; though Carnal Luſts have fetter'd Nature, and captivated the Will, that Men cannot reſcue themſelves from the Bondage of Sin, yet Divine Grace is offered in the Goſpel, to enable us to do what is impoſſible without it; and the Holy Spirit is promiſed to all that ſincerely ask it, who is ſtiled the

Spi-

Spirit of Love, and Power, and a ſound Mind, with reſpect to his Heavenly Operations in the Hearts of Men. Therefore as it would be Folly in a Scholar that is invited to the School of a learned Maſter, to diſcourage himſelf from going, becauſe he wants Learning: For that is to be obtained there, and only his Deſire and Capacity of Inſtruction is requiſite for his Admiſſion: ſo 'tis unreaſonable for thoſe who have a humble ſenſe of their Sins and Miſery, to be diſcouraged from coming to our Saviour; for he is moſt willing to reconcile God to them by his prevailing Mediation, and to communicate Divine Grace that they may perform that Obedience which God will graciouſly accept. This is to imitate the Apoſtles, of whom 'tis ſaid, *We preach not our ſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord.*

'Tis

'Tis of excellent use also for Preachers often to represent to Men the two Worlds, so vastly different in the Qualities, the Degrees and Duration of the Good and Evil Things that are enjoyed or suffered in them, that they may discover the Errors of their Ways before they come to their End, and Death opens their Eyes to see and lament what is lost and never to be recover'd. All the admired Things in the sensible World, are perishing Vanities; like an inchanted Feast that feeds the Eye, without real Nourishment: But in the Cœlestial World all is substantial, satisfying, and eternal. All the Evils, the Calamities, the Injuries, and Troubles suffer'd here, are no more to the Plagues prepared by revenging Justice for impenitent Sinners, than the slight razing of the Skin is to a deadly Wound in the Heart. Now the fundamental Delusion of Men is in

in valuing the present state of Things above what is Future, and infinitely better or worse. They think and call them only Happy, who live in Pomp, and flow in Riches and Pleasures; but as vainly as the Heathens dignified their Idols, with the Titles of Cœlestial Deities: They count them only miserable that are in Poverty, Sickness, and Afflictions here. And as 'tis observed, by the great Physician, that if a delirous Person proposes his incohœrent Fancies, seriously as the Product of Consideration, his Case is more dangerous and hardly curable: So the solemn Folly of Men that think it reasonable to esteem what is present and sensible, above what is future and spiritual; and accordingly to choose the present as the real substantial Good, and neglect the future as a matter of Fancy and Conceit, is hardly cured. Their Minds and Affections, their

Cui ideo reor veteres pagani tam speciosæ appellationis titulum dederunt, ut quia in eo non erat numen, vel nomen esset. Et quia non habebat aliquam ex potestate virtutem haberet saltem ex vocabulo divinitatem. *Salv. de Provid. l. 8.*

Αἱ δὲ παρὰ φρόσυναι μετὰ σκοῦδις ἐπισφαλέστεραι. *Hippoc. Aphor. Lib. 6.*

their Aims and Deſires center in the Earth: their Fears, Anxieties, Sorrows terminate there. And 'tis one neceſſary part of the Miniſter's Work to deveſt the World of its Maſquing Habit, that appears ſo rich and glittering in the Night by Torch-light, to ſtrip it naked as it ſhall burn in the conſuming Fire at the laſt Day: And to unvail the Glory of Heaven, and repreſent it to the Eyes of Chriſtians ſo as to raviſh their Hearts: In ſhort, to make ſuch a convincing Diſcovery of Things unſeen, that Men may judg, that only the Saints above are truly and perfectly Happy, and only the Reprobates in Hell are really and finally miſerable, and accordingly regulate their Lives.

I ſhall add to this, that the Language of Sermons ſhould be ſuitable to the quality of the Matter, and the end of that Divine Ordinance. A Miniſter muſt

ſpeak

ſpeak as becoming the Oracles of God: With ſolemn Expreſſions according to the Sanctity and Importance of the great Myſtery of Godlineſs. The Apoſtle tells us *his Speech was not with the enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom.* A Luxuriant flouriſh of Words, a vain Oſtentation of Wit, debaſes the Majeſty, enervates the Vigour, and corrupts the pure taſte of the Goſpel. True Eloquence is always ſuitable to the Subject, and ſprings from it; as the native Beauty of the Countenance that ſprings from a ſound Complexion of Body, and is not varniſh'd with the Paint of Art. When the Truth of Eternal Things is planted in the Heart, and the vital Senſe of them is ſhed in the Will and Affections, it will furniſh us with fit and powerful Words to expreſs them. Beſides, in the managing of a ſacred Argument, *ſalus populi ſuprema lex eſto:*

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The Salvation of Souls is the Rule to which the Language of Sermons must be parallel. Divine Truths must be represented with those clear and solemn Expressions, as may powerfully affect the Conscience, and excite the practick Faculties of the Soul, with such weighty and serious Words, as may awaken Sinners to fear the powerful and terrible Judg of the World, and to hate Sin that provokes his Displeasure. The curious Contexture of Words of pleasant Sound without Substance, is an elaborate Folly: 'Tis the framing a Net only fit to catch Flys, the vain Applauses of the injudicious, not to take Souls, the Divine Work of a Minister. And the Account must be woful for those Ministers to the Redeemer of Souls, whose Study, Thoughts, and Time are wasted for so guilty and base an end.

3. The

3. The Motives of their Affections and Endeavours in this Holy Service muſt be the Love of Chriſt and precious Immortal Souls. Our Saviour with repeated Earneſtneſs recommends this to St. *Peter, Loveſt thou me, feed my Lambs, feed my Sheep.* The Salvation of Souls is his deareſt Glory, and ſatisfying Pleaſure: As it was propheſied, that he ſhall *ſee of the Travel of his Soul, and be ſatisfied:* And our zealous Endeavours to ſave them from Death, is the natural and neceſſary Effect of our Love to him. A true Miniſter of Chriſt has a diviner Principle, a ſublimer Soul, than to aim at carnal Fruitions, at temporal and terreſtrial Rewards. The bleſſed End of his Office muſt be the End of all his ſtudious Thoughts and Labours, the Honour of his Maſter in the Converſion and Salvation of Sinners.

If the World be in their Eye and Heart as the Scope of their Miniſtry, they are guilty of the moſt unnatural Diſorder by employing the moſt excellent means for low and ſordid Ends, they uſe God to enjoy the World: this corrupts and ſtains their Service. Such Mercenaries *are empty Vines, that only bring forth Fruit unto themſelves:* They have their Reward here. But the Love of Chriſt and Souls reigns in the Heart of a faithful Miniſter: this regulates his Work in order to their ſpiritual and everlaſting Good.

This will make him deſcend to the Capacity of the meaneſt, and plainly to inſtruct them in things concerning their Salvation. As *Eliſha put his Mouth upon the Mouth, and his Eyes upon the Eyes, and his Hands upon the Hands of the dead Child,* and thereby conveyed a living Heat into him

him; ſo a Miniſter ſhould apply himſelf ſuitably to their Capacity, who are but Children in Knowledg. 'Tis his Duty to raiſe the low Underſtandings, as well as to humble the high and ſwelling Paſſions of Men.

This Love to Souls will inſpire him with tender melting Affections: without which, unleſs God renews the Miracle of *Aaron*'s dry Rod blooming and bearing Almonds, our Diſcourſes will be barren, without Fruit in the Hearers. A plain Sermon dictated from the Heart with a holy Heat of Affections, makes a ſolid Impreſſion upon the Hearers: When an elaborate Diſcourſe, not animated with the Affections, is of little Efficacy. As a blunter Iron, if burning hot, pierces more eaſily and deeply into a Piece of churliſh Wood, then a ſharper that is cold.

The Love of Chriſt and Souls inſpires with Joy and Alacrity in his Service. No Element is heavy in its own Sphere.

A mercenary Spirit performs the Work as an irkſom Task; but Love ſweetens all the Duties of the ſacred Calling, even ſuch as are moſt diſtaſtful to the Carnal. This entitles to the bleſſed Reward. The Apoſtle ſaith, *If I preach the Goſpel willingly, I have a Reward*: Otherwiſe his abundant Labours would be of no comfortable account at laſt.

3. The Miniſters of Chriſt muſt with moſt faithful Diligence attend his Service. The Subject and End of their Work challenges this of them, The Converſion and Salvation of Souls. What earneſt and repeated Calls are neceſſary to awaken thoſe who are involved in carnal Security, to perſwade them to love what they hate, and to hate what they love? and

and when the Foundation is laid in ſerious Repentance, and the Work of Grace begun, what Diligence is requiſite to raiſe it to Perfection? How does the malicious inceſſant Enemy of our Salvation ſtrive by a thouſand Temptations to blaſt our Endeavours?

The Work of a Miniſter is not like the Work of an Artificer: A Statuary with long Labour cuts the Marble to form it into a noble Image, but he leaves his work at his Pleaſure; and when he reſumes it, the Matter being durable, 'tis in the ſame ſtate towards finiſhing as when he left it. But the Heart of Man is of a ſtrange Nature, hard as Marble and fluid as Water; Heavenly Impreſſions are with difficulty made in it, and eaſily defac'd. When by many Prayers and Tears, many tender Addreſſes of Miniſters the Heart is ſoftened, and the Image

of Christ, the Lineaments of his Divine Graces and Vertues are first drawn in it, without a continual Eye and Attendance upon the Work, how soon are those blessed Beginnings spoiled, and the carnal Lusts regain the Heart? How hard is it to prevail with Men to enter into the narrow Way, and to preserve them from defiling Lapses in it, or woful Excursions into the pleasant ways of Sin, and to bring them safely to Heaven? The solemn Adjuration of the Apostle to *Timothy* should excite Ministers with the most watchful Care and useful Diligence to attend their Work: *I charge thee before the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judg the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom: Preach the Word, be instant, in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and Doctrine.* What Opiate can stupify the Conscience

2 Tim. 4. 1,2.

ſcience of idle Miniſters ſo as not to be awakened by theſe ardent Expreſſions? How can they appear before the moſt High, and Everlaſting Judge? What will be a ſufficient Defence before his inlightned Tribunal? What Apologies will skreen them from his fiery Diſpleaſure? Will their Ignorance, or Abundance, or Slothfulneſs excuſe the neglect of their Duty? They may deceive themſelves with vain Allegations to palliate their Negligence, but God will not be mocked. If in the laſt Judgment thoſe who neglected to feed the Poor with material Bread to ſupport their Bodies, ſhall be placed with the Reprobates at the Left Hand of Chriſt, how can thoſe whoſe Office it is to diſpenſe the Bread of Life to Souls, and neglect to feed them, eſcape Condemnation?

The uſeful Diligence I have been urging upon Miniſters, is

not only neceſſary in publick ſolemn preaching the Word, but in ſeaſonable applying it to particular Perſons within their Compaſs and Care. Of this we have an excellent Pattern in St. *Paul*, who gives this Account of his Spiritual Work: *We preach Chriſt, warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all Wiſdom; that we may preſent every Man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus.* A Miniſter ſhould with watchful Diligence take all Opportunities for the ſaving of precious Souls; and ſometimes one ſhort Leſſon ſeriouſly applied to a Perſon in private, more powerfully, affects the Conſcience, and moves the Affections, than a long and well ſtudied Sermon.

Col. 1. 28.

4. The Servants of Chriſt muſt with Reſolution and Conſtancy deſpiſe the Allurements and the Terrors of the World in performing the Duties of their Office.

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The Apoſtle declares his fixed Mind, *I count not my Life dear to me, ſo that I may finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus:* Tho amongſt the pikes of a thouſand Dangers he was never faint-hearted, much leſs falſe-hearted, in the Cauſe of Chriſt. The two principal parts of the Miniſter's Duty are to preſerve the Truths of the Goſpel inviolate, and to open and enforce the Commands of it in their ſpiritual Purity and Extent: They are ſtiled *the Lights of the World, and the Salt of the Earth.* Acts 20. 24.

All the Truths of the Goſpel are of precious value, but not of equal clearneſs and moment: And Chriſtian Charity ſhould moderate between Diſſenters in ſmaller Matters, who agree in the main Points of Religion. But thoſe Truths of the Goſpel that are primary and radical, and thoſe that by

by neceſſary Conſequence are deduc'd from them, require our moſt vigilant Care and Zeal to preſerve them entire and untainted. 'Tis a univerſal Duty reſpecting Chriſtians, to ſearch out the Truth *as 'tis in Jeſus*, to underſtand the Reaſons of the Religion they profeſs, and to *contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints*. But the Miniſters of Chriſt who by virtue of their Office are Depoſitaries of the Truth, are chiefly obliged to aſſert and defend it: Eſpecially when there are many Snares ſpread abroad to entangle ignorant and unſtable Souls with dangerous Errors. Our Saviour has ſet us a pattern of our Duty, who declared, *For this end was I born, and came into the World to bear witneſs to the Truth.* They are falſe to the ſacred Truſt repoſed in them, when, by Silence the Truth is in danger of being oppreſt. 'Tis

their

their Duty and Glory to be *valiant for the Truth*, when falſe Doctrines boldly oppoſe it, and poyſon'd Arrows are ſhot into the Eyes of Men by erroneous Teachers. 'Tis ſaid of *John* the Baptiſt, *He was not the Light, but as next in Dignity, he came to bear witneſs of the Light.* But if they withdraw their Teſtimony when the Truth challenges it, they will be covered with Confuſion at the laſt Day; according to that fearful Threatning, *Whoſoever denies me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* The ignorance of Saving-Truths will not excuſe the People; and Silence will condemn their Guides who ſhould illuſtrate and defend the Truth even in the Face of Danger.

Beſides they are guilty of Unfaithfulneſs to Chriſt, who by colourable temperaments adulterate the Purity of the Truth, and by milder

milder modifications qualify and leſſen Errors; who would joyn the Word of God with the Traditions of Men, which are incompatible as Mid-night and Mid-day. None are more artificial than fearful Spirits: They have many Turns and Expedients to compound neceſſary Controverſies, and to make it ſeem indifferent which Opinion is choſen. They transform their fearful Apprehenſions, into Counſels of Prudence, and diſguiſe the baſeneſs of their Cowardiſe under the Reputation of being Diſcreet. The wiſeſt of Men who underſtood the incomparable value of Truth, adviſes, *Buy the Truth, and ſell it not:* And we are told by St. *James, The Wiſdom, that is from above, is firſt pure, and then peaceable:* But the Worldly-wiſe, with Art and Induſtry endeavour to ſecure their outward Peace with the violation of Truth. How contrary is the Judg-

Judgment of God to the vain Opinions of Men? He is jealous of the Simplicity of his Truth, and the Chaſtity of his Worſhip, and will at laſt convince ſuch of their extream Folly who would reconcile Religions that can never flow into one another.

'Tis therefore an indiſpenſable Obligation of the Servants of Chriſt to adhere to the eternal Truth in Scriptures, tho vilified by ſome as an inſufficient Rule, or impertinent and not abſolutely neceſſary: And to preſerve the pure Doctrine and tranſmit it to ſucceeding Ages. And this divine Encouragement ſhould ſuſtain them with unfainting Reſolution to do their Duty, that if they cannot ſave the Truth from being over-born at preſent, yet the Truth will ſave them, and that it will pierce through all Oppoſition, and be victorious in the Iſſue. The Church of Chriſt is of a ſupernatural

pernatural Original and Order, and contrary to the cuſtom of Human Things, is enlarg'd and eſtabliſh'd by the means uſed to deſtroy it. When the Heathen Powers with the utmoſt Rage and Cruelty attempted its final Ruine it proſper'd the more: The patient Deaths of the Martyrs, as well as conſpicuous Miracles, gave credit and conveyance to the Goſpel.

And the Miniſters of Chriſt muſt with Faithfulneſs and Courage enforce the Commands of the Goſpel upon all. Carnal Men would fain relax the ſtrictneſs of the Goſpel; and endeavour to make their Principles correſpondent to their Practices: They try to bend the Rule to their diſordered and licentious Appetites, and will not regulate their Hearts and Lives according to the Sanctity of the Rule: And thoſe who are high in the World, very uneaſily bear the Conviction and Reproof

of

of their Sin: But a Miniſter muſt be faithful to Chriſt and their Souls, and preſs upon them the Commands of our Judg, *to pluck out the right Eye, and cut off the right Hand,* upon the heavy Penalty of being made entire Victims to revenging Juſtice for ever.

5. They muſt with a prudent temperament of Zeal and Meekneſs, inſinuate and open a Paſſage for ſanctifying and ſaving Doctrine into the Hearts of Men. This is the ſucceſsful Method to convince thoſe who are ſeduced with Errors, and to reclaim the *Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt.* The Defence of the Truth muſt be managed in a calm peaceable manner; as the Sun ſcatters and overcomes the darkneſs of the Night and Clouds without noiſe. 'Tis the Apoſtle's Counſel, *In Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves:* Without Contumelies

melies and Revilings; for Injuries convince no Man. The Human Spirit is naturally proud and ſtiff, and will reſiſt ſuch Arms: Fierceneſs and Scorn irritate the Paſſions, and hinder impartial and ſerious Deliberation, that opens the Mind for receiving the Truth. To perſwade the Soul, the mild and placid manner of conveying the Truth is as effectual as the Irradiation and Evidence of it. And to reclaim the diſobedient there is nothing more powerful than Gentleneſs and the conſtraint of Love. The moſt fervent Reprehenſions of Sinners muſt be mixt with tenderneſs to their Souls. Under the Law there was a ſevere Prohibition of offering Sacrifices with the common Fire: But only with that Fire that came from Heaven, and was preſerved Day and Night in the Temple: The Alluſion is eaſy and fit: The Reprehenſion of Sinners in the Pulpit muſt be al-

always from Zeal for the Honour of God and the Eternal Salvation of Souls, not from natural fiery Paſſions. If a Miniſter denounces the Judgments of God with Compaſſion to Souls, if he thunder and lightens in his Sermons, a Shower of repenting Tears will follow in convinced Sinners.

6. A Miniſter of the Goſpel muſt joyn a holy Life with ſound Doctrine, according to our Saviour's Deſcription of him: *He that ſhall do and teach my Commands, ſhall be great in the Kingdom of Heaven.* He muſt not only be free from Pollutions, but excel in Vertues; nothing in his Converſation ſhould be worthy of Reproach, nothing but what is worthy of Imitation. He muſt lead a Life anſwerable to the Excellence and End of his Calling. He is to preach a Doctrine ſo holy divine and venerable, that it would become the unſpotted An-

gels to be miniſtring Spirits in revealing it to Men. He is therefore ſtrictly obliged to ſhew forth the Power of Godlineſs, and the Beauty of Holineſs in all his ways. He muſt imitate and honour his Maſter, who inſeparably united *ſaying and doing in himſelf:* He muſt adorn the Goſpel by expreſſing the Efficacy of divine Truths in his Actions. Under the Law he that had touch'd a dead Body, was forbidden to approach the Sanctuary: and what a Violation is it of all the Rules of Decency and Reaſon, for one who is employed in the holy Service of the Goſpel, to be polluted with dead Works? *Tertullian* writing of the Excellency of Patience, and reflecting upon himſelf, how oppoſite his fiery Nature was to that Vertue, was deeply affected with Grief and Shame, and drew up his own Arraignment and Proceſs for his Impatience: How much

Miſer ego ſemper æger caloribus impatientiæ. Confiteor ad Dominum Deum, ſatis temere me, ſi non etiam impudenter de patientia componere auſum, cui præſtandæ idoneus omnino non ſim.

much juſter Cauſe has an unholy Miniſter to be ſurpriſed with Horrour and Confuſion, conſidering the irreconcileable oppoſition between his Doctrine and his Life? How juſt and ſtinging is the upbraiding Speech of God to ſuch? how peremptory the Rejection? *What haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, and to take my Covenant into thy Mouth, ſince thou hateſt to be reformed, and haſt caſt my Words behind thee?* The End of the ſacred Miniſtry requires Holineſs in thoſe who perform it: That is to convert Men to the Faith and Obedience of the Goſpel. Now the Practice of a Miniſter gives Weight and Efficacy to his Doctrine, the exemplifying of it in his Actions is the moſt powerful perſwaſive to draw Men to their Duty. Therefore the Apoſtle commands *Titus in all Things to ſhew himſelf a Pattern of good Works.* As

the Plants that are productive of Balm, and Myrrh, and Incenſe, have a Fragrancy not only in the precious Liquor that diſtils from them, but all their Branches, and Leaves, and Bark, are Aromatick. Thus a Miniſter of the Goſpel, muſt be Holy not only in his Doctrine, but in all manner of Converſation. *Be thou an Example of the Believers in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity*, is the ſolemn Charge to *Timothy*. He that is holy in his Profeſſion, and unholy in his Life, both diſcredits the Goſpel, and hardens Men in their Sins. Though his Tongue may direct to Heaven, if his Life leads to Hell, the Authority of his Actions will be more prevalent than of his Inſtructions. The Vices of a Miniſter are more conſpicuous and infamous than of private Perſons: As a Blemiſh in the Eye is more conſpicuous and

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diſfiguring than in a concealed Part of the Body; and they have the moſt corrupting deſtructive Influence upon others. For there is nothing more natural than for Men to think that Miniſters do not believe what they preach, when there is a viſible Contradiction between their Lives and their Words: That their moſt zealous Sermons are rather Pageantry than ſerious Piety, and accordingly to ſlight them. This is a principal Reaſon that the Converſion of Sinners is ſo rare: 'Tis not from any defect in the word, for that is not like ſome medicinal Drugs, that loſe their Virtue by Age, it has the ſame Divine Power to revive dead Souls, to transform the carnal into ſpiritual Perſons, to clarify the Mind that it may ſee things inviſible, to reconcile the Will to the Sanctity of God's Law, to calm the ſtormy Affections, and leave an

Impreſſion of its Purity in the Hearts of Men: but the admirable and ſecret Grace of the holy Spirit is not uſually concomitant with the Miniſtry of thoſe who grieve him, and quench him in themſelves; and they render the holy Doctrine ineffectual by their diſcordant Converſations. It was the Character of the wicked Phariſees from the Mouth of Chriſt: *They ſay, and do not*: and to them, and all that are involved in the ſame Guilt, the Saviour of the World threatens the moſt heavy Damnation.

7. Humble, fervent, and continual Prayer to the *Father of Mercies, and the Father of Spirits*, that he would bleſs the outward Miniſtry, is requiſite to make it effectual. The Converſion of Man is not wrought by Man, but by the Energy of the holy Spirit. God inſtructs us what he does in the more ſecret Operations

rations of Grace, by what he does in the more viſible Operations of Nature. This is expreſs'd by the Apoſtle; Paul *plants, and* Apollos *waters, but God gives the Increaſe.* A Man plants a green Stick, and waters it; but the God of Nature forms the Tree in all its Parts, the Root, the Sap, the Trunk, the Branches, and the Fruits: The planting by the Hand of Man is neceſſary for the Growth of a Tree, but what is that to the Divine Bleſſing? Thus according to the ordinary Method of Divine Grace, God unites his marvellous Power with the weak Miniſtry of Men for the Salvation of Souls, and according to the Apoſtle's arguing, it is an impoſſible Event that *Men ſhould believe without hearing the Goſpel, and hear without a Preacher*: But the converting and ſaving of Souls is to be aſcribed to God. And thus in the Spiritual Husbandry, the

Occaſions of Pride and Slothfulneſs are equally removed. As the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *He that plants is nothing, and he that waters, is nothing, but God that gives the Increaſe.* This Conſideration ſhould be an Incentive in our Breaſts, to petition the God of all Grace that he will pleaſe to give Life and Efficacy to his Word. In *Jacob*'s Viſion of the myſterious Ladder that reach'd from Heaven to Earth, the Angels were aſcending and deſcending: An Emblem of a Miniſter's Duty, they muſt firſt aſcend in Prayer and Contemplation, and then deſcend in preaching to the People. 'Tis obſervable that ſometimes Men of excellent Accompliſhments are blaſted in their Miniſtry; and others of meaner Abilities, but of more holy Affections, are very inſtrumental to ſave Souls: The Reaſon is plain; thoſe who are moſt frequent and fervent in Prayer,

Prayer, obtain the richeſt Abundance of the Spirit, and are uſually moſt bleſt with Succeſs. When the Apoſtles were filled with the Holy Ghoſt, deſcending in the ſignificant Emblem of fiery Tongues; what an admirable Influence had their Preaching upon the obdurate *Jews?* The firſt Sermon preſently convinc'd and converted three thouſand, that were Murderers of our Saviour, with the Stains of his Blood freſh upon them. Tongues of Fleſh are without vigor, make no laſting Impreſſion upon the Hearers: Tongues of Fire have a divine Force and Operation, to diſpel the Ignorance and Errors of Mens Minds, to quicken the dull Earth of their Affections, to refine and purify their Converſations.

Laſtly, To ſum up all in one general Conſideration; He ſerves Chriſt, that employs all his Abilities,

lities, and uſes all Opportunities in the Circle of his Calling, as was before ſpoken of, for the Honour of our Saviour. This is repreſented in the Parable of the *Talents*, which the Maſter committed to his Servants; different in their Number, but to be faithfully improved for the Maſter's Intereſt. Under the Talents are compriſed all that we have and are; whether in the Order of Nature, and with reſpect to our civil State in the World, all our intellectual and ſenſitive Faculties, all our innate and acquired Endowments, our Time, our Health, our Dignities and Power, our Eſtates; or Spiritual Bleſſings, all the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, the Light of the Goſpel, all the Advantages we have of doing or receiving Good for our more excellent and immortal part, the Salvation of our Souls. Every one according

to

to the Character wherewith he is invested in this World, and according to his Capacity of doing Good, must be diligent in the service of Christ. In what Relations soever Men are, as Fathers, Masters, or Magistrates in a superiour Rank, or as Friends and Associates in an equal Line, and as they stand related to all Men, they are either by Authority and Command, or by Counsel and compassionate Care and Encouragements to promote with Diligence, their Temporal and Eternal Welfare. The Apostle's Advice with respect to Acts of Beneficence for relieving the Poor, *Let us do good unto all as we have opportunity*, is by just Analogy binding to all other Expressions of Love, to direct, to perswade Men to their Duty, to comfort them in their Sorrows, to assist them in all their Wants and Exigencies. Briefly, the Wisdom

Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Chriſt's Servants conſiſts in their faithful improving all their Talents for his Glory, as our Saviour declares, *Who is that wiſe and faithful Servant*; *and, Well done good and faithful Servant.*

2. We are to ſhew upon what accounts our Service is due to Chriſt. If we ſeriouſly conſider things, it will be evident that by all the Titles of Juſtice and Gratitude, by all Divine and Rational Rights we are obliged to ſerve him intirely and for ever.

In the preſent State there are four ways whereby Men become Servants: Some are born Servants; ſome are by ranſom and purchaſe; ſome by victorious reſcue and deliverance; others are Servants by Covenant and Agreement. Now all theſe Titles concur in obliging us to ſerve Chriſt.

1. We

1. We are his Servants by Nature, he has an original and unalianeble Right in us as our Creator. God to ſatisfy the Inquiry of *Moſes* defines himſelf, *I am*: All the intimate and eternal Attributes of the Deity are implyed in that ſhort Title: He is the only neceſſary Being by his Nature, and conſequently has all Perfections in himſelf, and is the Fountain of all Being. *His Hands made us and faſhioned us, he breathed into us a living Soul.* All our Faculties and their Efficacy are from him. He produces this evidence of his Right in us, *Remember O Jacob thou art my Servant, I have formed thee:* The Pſalmiſt declares, *Know ye that the Lord he is God; 'tis he that made us, and not we our Selves; we are his People and Sheep of his Paſture:* We owe to him an Obedience as ready & unconſtrain'd as the meekeſt Creatures pay to thoſe that feed

Eſa. 44. 12.

feed and conduct them. His Perfections qualify him to be our abſolute Maſter, for his Will is always directed by infinite Wiſdom, 'tis the Rule of Goodneſs, and his Benefits in making and preſerving us, acquire to him a ſupreme Right in us. Now if there be a Spark of Reaſon in our Minds, 'tis impoſſible to have the leaſt Shadow of doubt, that a derivative Being has a dependent Working, and is to employ his active Powers according to the Will of his Maker, as the Rule, and his Glory as the ultimate End of all.

The Connexion is indiſſolvable, *for of him, and through him, and to him are all things.* The Pſalmiſt ardently calls the whole World; *Bleſs the Lord all ye his Works, in all Places of his Dominion.* The Angels who by Nobility of Nature are ſuperiour to all his other Works, yet are not

Pſal. 103.

ſui

ſui juris, at their own diſpoſals, but his Miniſters *that do his Pleaſure*: They employ *their excellent Strength* in humble Obedience to his Commands: they fly with incredible *Swiftneſs* to perform his Orders. And in the viſible World, the Heavens in their Motion, the Earth in its Seaſons, with an invariable Tenor obſerve the Law impreſs'd upon them in their Creation: As the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *they continue this day according to thy Ordinance, for all are thy Servants.* And if the Creatures without Reaſon and Senſe are perfectly ſubject to his Will, much more ſhould Man who underſtands his Obligations to the Creator. Now the Son of God made us, and maintains our Beings by his powerful Providence; from whence it follows, we are under an eternal Obligation to ſerve and glorify him to the utmoſt of our Capacities.

Dan. 9.

Pſal. 118.181.

His

His unexcited and moſt free Goodneſs decreed our Beings from everlaſting, and in time brought us into the World, whereas he might have created innumerable other Perſons, for Omnipotence is without Bounds, and left us in the pure Poſſibility of Being, without the giving actual Being to us. The natural Law that ſhines in the Minds of Men, in the Knowledg of what is juſt and good, and in the Conſcience of what is evil, binds them with the deepeſt Humility to acknowledg the Greatneſs and Goodneſs of our Creator, and in the ſenſe of this firſt and fundamental Benefit to conſecrate our ſelves for ever to his Service.

2. We are his Servants not only upon the general Title of Creation, but in a more peculiar manner by Redemption. Man by his Diſobedience was fallen into

into a woful Bondage, his Guilt ſubjected him to the threatning, that contained two Deaths in one Sentence, the temporal and preſent of the Body, and the eternal of the Soul. The righteous Judg of the the World, whoſe Law was broken, required an honourable Reparation of it: the moſt coſtly Sacrifices of Beaſts, a Sea of Blood could never atone his Diſpleaſure: Nay, the Obedience and Sufferings of Men and Angels were of no value to ſatisfy his injured Juſtice: Thus Mankind was deſperately loſt, our Ruines (if I may ſo ſpeak) were ſowed with Salt, we were concluded under his moſt righteous and fearful Wrath: If the Love and Wiſdom of God had not accorded to find out that aſtoniſhing expedient of uniting the eternal Son of God with the human Nature in one Perſon, that as Man he might voluntarily

ſubmit to bloody Sufferings, and as God give an infinite Merit and Value to them, and thereby purchaſe our Redemption. This is accompliſhed by Jeſus Chriſt; *The Lord laid on him the Iniquity of us all; he gave his Life a ranſom for us:* From hence a new Right ſprings of his Dominion over us; as the Apoſtle invincibly argues, *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your Bodies, and in your Spirit, which are God's.* The naked repreſenting of this to the ſerious Mind muſt awaken a dear Senſe of our Obligations to our Saviour: but if we ſolemnly and deliberately contemplate this amazing Benefit, out of what Rock is the Heart framed, that is not ſoften'd and melted in Love and Obedience to our Bleſſed Redeemer. To heighten the Senſe of our Obligations, Conſider,

1. A

1. A more excellent Goodneſs is viſible in the redeeming Man than in creating the Angels, upon the account of the diſtance of the Terms and the Difficulty of the way to effect it. In the Creation of Angels, Goodneſs was rich indeed, there being no Poſſibility of deſert in pure nothing, but it was ſimply free; whereas in our Salvation it is merciful beyond all Imagination, for by our Rebellion we were juſtly fallen under the Wrath of God: Their Creation was without the leaſt ſtrain of his Power; *He ſpake, and it was done*: But there was a legal Bar againſt our Reſtitution: To remove it, *his Son endured the Curſe of the Law for us, and bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree.* Divine Love in our Redemption not only exceeds what was ſhewed in the Creation of Angels, but is admirably illuſtrated by a higher com-

pariſon: For the Father ſeemed to love us above his only begotten Son, *whom he ſpared not, but delivered him up for us all; and the Son loved us above his Life, which he laid down for us.*

2. By the way of our Redemption he has infinitely honoured our Nature that was ſo vilified by the Fall. Man, whoſe Soul was an immortal Spirit, ſtamped with the lively Image of God, capable of everlaſting Communion with him in Glory, was ſold for nought. *Be aſtoniſhed O ye Heavens at this, and be very deſolate:* That Man, who had the two great Lights of Natural Reaſon and Divine Faith, ſhould prefer the pleaſing an irregular Appetite before the Favour of God, and for a vain Fancy loſe the moſt ſubſtantial Happineſs. Thus *Man being in Honour, and underſtood not, became like the Beaſts that periſh, nay viler*

ler than the Earth. And all the Children of *Adam* ſin *according to the Similitude of his firſt Tranſgreſſion.* O the cheap Damnation of Sinners! For tranſient Pleaſures, and mean Profits they venture upon eternal Death. This guilty and woful Folly not only defiles, but debaſes Men to Hell. Now the Lord of Life and Glory by ſuffering an ignominious Death for us, has with the cleareſt evidence diſcovered the true Worth of Souls: That they are precious beyond compariſon, ſince the whole World is not a valuable Compenſation for them: *We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb without ſpot and blemiſh:* That ſacred Treaſure of Heaven that was laid down for us, exceedingly increaſes our Obligations to the Bleſſed Redeemer.

Idoneus ſui operis æſtimator, magno pretio nos redemit. *Arnob.*

3. By giving himſelf for us,

he has not only freed us from the Wrath of God, but reſtored us to his deareſt Favour: We are tranſlated from the fearful State of being God's Enemies into the amiable joyful State of his Children: And conſequently our Redeemer has purchaſed for us not only Salvation from Hell, but eternal Glory, a Life more divine and durable than the natural Life in Paradiſe. How can we ſeriouſly think of this tranſcendent Benefit without a rapture of Affection? He infinitely deſerves our Love and Service who has bought us with ſo dear a price, and purchaſed for us a glorious and incorruptible Inheritance.

3. We are his Servants by his Deliverance of us from our Spiritual Enemies, Satan, Sin, and Death. Since the Devil obtained a woful Victory over us in the Fall of *Adam*, great was the Triumph

umph of Hell: And though he be an Uſurper of God's Right, which could never be extinguiſhed, yet by our Overthrow he has a kind of a Title to us, and keeps us as the Spoils of his Victory: And having revolted from God, we are juſtly though miſerably under the Powers of Darkneſs. We are chained in the loweſt and the vileſt Bondage: The Soul and Body are under his tyrannous Dominion, and ſuffer the deepeſt Wounds of Infamy and Cruelty. He fetters our Minds with dangerous Deluſions, our Wills with divers Luſts and Paſſions, and leads Men Captives in the ways of Sin, till they fall into Hell the Centre of Miſery. Now as in redeeming a Captive, there muſt be the paying the Ranſom, and the breaking his Chains, that he may be reſtored to Liberty: So, beſides the Price that was payed to God

the Supreme Judg, for our Diſcharge, our Saviour has broken our Chains; he by the ſanctifying Spirit diſpels the Darkneſs of our Minds, ſoftens the Hardneſs of our Hearts, ſubdues the Rebellion of our Wills, rectifies the Diſorder of our Affections, that we may be freed from the Dominion of Sin, as well as from the Obligation and Terrors of the Law. He has broken the Powers of Darkneſs that conſpired to keep us faſt in the Intanglements of our Iniquities, he has freed us from the ſpiritual *Pharaoh*, and his cruel Task-Maſters, the imperious violent Luſts that are ſeated in the Heart, and reſtores *us to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*; *By dying he deſtroyed him that had the Power of Death, and triumphed over Principalities and Powers on the Croſs.* We have Freedom of Pardon and of Grace, and the natural and neceſſary Con-

Luke 11. 21.

Conſequence is, that we cheerfully ſerve him that ſet us free. This is expreſſed by *Zacharias* in his divine Thanſgiving, that *being delivered from the Hands of our Enemies, we might ſerve him without Fear in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the Days of our Lives.* In what a holy Extaſy does the Pſalmiſt break forth, *O Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant, and the Son of thy Handmaid, thou haſt broken my Bonds:* Yet this was but the reſcuing of him from ſome temporal imminent Danger: How much dearer and ſtronger Ingagements bind us to ſerve our Redeemer, who has freed us from the Power as well as Puniſhment of Sin? Love ſhould correſpond with Love: As Love deſcends in Favours and Benefits, it ſhould aſcend in Thankfulneſs and Duty. St. *Paul* had ſuch a lively apprehenſion of our Saviour's Love, that it

it had an abſolute Empire in his Heart and Life; he expreſſes it in the moſt ſignificant manner: *The Love of Chriſt conſtrains us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one dyed for all, then were all dead; and that he dyed for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live to themſelves, but unto him which dyed for them and roſe again.* The Word *conſtraineth*, ſignifies properly to be intirely under the Power of another: As the Prophets inſpired by the Spirit of God, only ſpake and acted according to his extraordinary Motions in them.

Acts 18. 5.

Thus the Love of Chriſt had ſuch an abſolute Empire in his Heart, that his whole Life was ſpent as a vowed Oblation to his Service and Glory. And whoever does not live a ſpiritual Life, as the Servant of Chriſt, never yet felt the Miſery of this Bondage of Sin, nor the ſweetneſs of that Liberty which the Son of God

God has purchaſed for his People.

Laſtly; We are the Servants of Chriſt by ſolemn Covenant, and the moſt ſacred Ingagement. In the Covenant of Grace God and Man are the Parties: And ſuch was his condeſcending Love, that he came down from Heaven and aſſumed our Nature, on purpoſe to ſeal his part in his own Blood, the Promiſe of his pardoning Mercy, of his ſanctifying Spirit, and his rewarding Goodneſs, to all that with unfeigned Conſent and firm Reſolution will ſeal the Counterpart of their Duty and Obedience to him. We are entred into his Family and the Relation of his Servants in Baptiſm; and vowed univerſal Obedience to our new Maſter, in defiance of all Temptations whether inviting or terrifying in the World: For this reaſon Baptiſm is called *the Anſwer of a good Conſcience* 1 Pet. 3. 12.

ence towards God. We wear his Colours, are diſtinguiſhed from the Heathens by the Title of *Chriſtians*: We ratify in a moſt ſolemn manner our Covenant by the Seal of the Lord's Supper, wherein we ſacramentally eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour. Now from hence ariſes a new Obligation to ſerve Chriſt: He had a Soveraign Right in us antecedently to our dedicating our ſelves to his Service, but from our voluntary Conſent accrues another Title, whereby he claims our perpetual Service. The Law of God binds us without our Conſent, but our Conſent increaſes the Obligation; and if we are careleſs of our Duty, and deſert his Service, we break double Bonds, and are guilty not only of Diſobedience to the Law, but of perfidious Violation of our Covenant. 'Tis obſervable in the Parable of the Talents, they were com-

committed to Servants, from whence a double Obligation ſprings, to employ them with intire Fidelity for the Maſter's Profit. A Merchant ſends Goods to his Correſpondent, who is bound to make faithful returns upon the account of commutative Juſtice that reaches all: but a Servant is under a ſpecial Obligation, and if he waſts or neglects the improving his Maſter's Goods, he does not only break this Truſt repoſed in him, but violates the Duty of a Servant, that obliges him to manage them according to his Maſter's Will, and for his Profit. The Account will be particular and exact for all our Talents at the laſt: None ſo high that ſhall be excuſed, none ſo mean that ſhall eſcape that ſtrict Inquiry: For he that knows all things, ſhall be our Judg. The Servant that had

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but one Talent was called to account for it, and condemned for neglecting to improve it: He pretended that he hid it out of caution leſt it ſhould be loſt, knowing his Maſter's Severity; but his vain excuſe was retorted upon him, to aggravate his Sin and Sentence: *Caſt the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth*: A Judgment as righteous as terrible: For the Guilt of his Rebellion, in not uſing his Talent according to his Maſter's Order; and Unthankfulneſs, in deſpiſing his Gifts, and an unrighteous depriving of others of that Benefit, that was by the Maſter's Will due to them.

3. We are to conſider the final Reward of Chriſt's Servants under two Heads.

1. The Order of the Reward.
2. The Excellency of it.

1. The Order, in giving it after the

the Service of Chriſt faithfully and conſtantly performed. 'Tis the revealed Will of God, that *all Men ſhould honour the Son as they honour the Father:* The Son is the Heir of his Love and Glory, and in ſerving him the Father is honoured and obeyed. And as our Saviour reigns eternally in Heaven, after the finiſhing his Work injoyned him by the Father, ſo according to his Example, we receive the Crown of Life after the courſe of our Obedience. This is the Tenor of the Promiſe: *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame and am ſat down with my Father in his Throne.* Rev. 3. 21.

The Order in diſpenſing the bleſſed Reward, does not in the leaſt eclipſe the Honour of God's Grace, or afford the leaſt ſhadow of preſuming upon any Merit in our beſt Services. *The Wages of Sin is Death,* 'tis the juſt Deſert

ſert of it; *but the Gift of God is eternal Life in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* The eternal Election of Perſons to Life, the preparing of them by ſanctifying Grace for Glory, and the actual poſſeſſion of it, is from the moſt free Favour of God. Election is *the firſt Fountain of Water ſpringing up to eternal Life:* For what could induce God when all Mankind was equally involved in Guilt and Miſery, to chooſe ſome to be Veſſels of Grace and of Glory, but his ſoveraign Pleaſure and pure Grace? The Elect were in the Eye and Heart of God from Eternity, appointed to ſupernatural Happineſs, but that free and inſuperable Decree is accompliſhed according to the *Law of Faith*, the unchangeable Order of the Goſpel; and that is, that Heaven ſhall be the Reward of the faithful Servants of Chriſt; not for the true Deſert of their Service, but

but the moſt gracious and rich Bounty of God. The Angels of Glory cannot from a Plea of Juſtice claim any Reward from God: For the Rights of Juſtice ſuppoſe ſome Equality between thoſe who reſpectively are obliged by them, tho not in all regards, yet ſo far as a certain common Rule makes them equal: But there is ſuch an immenſe diſtance between the Divine Majeſty and the higheſt Creatures, that there is no Foundation for ſuch a Plea between them.

Beſides, the Duty of Obedience is abſolute: For all our natural Powers and ſupernatural Strength are his Gifts, and were there no Reward aſſured to us, are to be faithfully employed in his Service. Now the Paiment of a Debt cannot deſerve a Reward. Our beſt Services are blemiſhed with many Imperfections, and without the Mercy of the Goſpel

that mollifies the ſtrictneſs of the Law, would make us liable to Puniſhments; *God ſpares us, as a Father ſpares his Son that ſerves him*: Now Pardon and Merit are utterly inconſiſtent. And what Proportion can there be between our mean and ſhort Services, and *the eternal weight of Glory*? Even Martyrdom, which is the moſt ſignal Act of Love and Obedience to our Redeemer, the higheſt Advancing of his Glory, the moſt noble Teſtimony of his Truth; when our Example works upon others, and engages them to Chriſt, and entitles us to a kind of Intereſt in all they do and ſuffer for his Name, yet even the laying down our Lives is by infinite degrees below the Glory of Heaven, that is the promiſed Reward to it. This St. *Paul* teſtifies from his deliberate Judgment, *I reckon that the Sufferings of this preſent time are not worthy*

to

to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us. From hence in Scripture the Reward is often expres'd by Mercy: The Apoſtle prays for *Oneſiphorus,* whoſe valiant Love in viſiting and ſupplying him in the time of his Impriſonment, was ſet off illuſtriouſly by the Diſcouragements and Inconſtancy of others who neglected him; *The Lord grant to him that he may find Mercy of the Lord in that day.* And we are exhorted to *keep our ſelves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal Life.* But although there is no Merit in our Service of the Reward, yet God has wiſely eſtabliſhed an Order and Conſequence between them, as the moſt conducing for his Glory and our Good. For not only the ſuperabundant Mercy, but the Righteouſneſs and Truth of God appear with an eminency of Glo-

ry in this way of making us happy. The Promiſe of the Reward was from excellent Goodneſs, but the performing it to his faithful Servants is from his Juſtice and Fidelity. He was unlimitedly free, but having pleaſed with ſuch condeſcending Favour to make a Covenant with us, upour ſincere Compliance with the Terms of it, he is obliged for the Honour of his Truth and Righteouſneſs to accompliſh it: though in ſtrictneſs he can owe nothing to us, yet he is a Debtor to his Promiſe. From hence the Apoſtle ſaith, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſh'd my Courſe; from henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which God the righteous Judg ſhall give unto me.* The Honour of his Truth is ſacred and inviolable: Thus he is proclaimed in a ſtile expreſſing how glorious his Truth is, and how dear to him,

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The Lord thy God, he is God; and the only Attribute that is annext is, *the Faithful God, keeping Covenant and Mercy.* At the laſt day he will be glorified not only as the free and magnificent Donor of all the Treaſures of Heaven, but as the God of Truth, who has fulfilled all the exceeding great and precious Promiſes made to his Servants. Deut. 7. 9.

And the Connexion between our Duty and the Reward, has a powerful influence to excite our ſincere and earneſt Endeavours to pleaſe God: 'Tis the ſtrongeſt Engagement to Univerſal Sanctity and Obedience. For the Goſpel is an everlaſting Covenant, and Condition of it is unalterable: Heaven is not promiſed as an abſolute irreſpective Gift, but as a Reward conſequent of Services. There can be no lively regular hope of future Happineſs, but according to the Re-

velation of God's Will, who gives it: The Accompliſhment of his Promiſe has a dependance upon our Duty. The Crown of Life is promiſed to *thoſe that love God*; *and Love is the fulfilling of the Law:* If any one aſpires to that Dignity, he muſt from Love, which is the internal Character and Diſpoſition of a Saint, obey and ſerve God. To preſume of obtaining our laſt and bleſſed End, without a diligent uſe of the means preſcribed in the Goſpel, is ſuch idle prepoſterous Folly that Men would be aſhamed of with reſpect to the gaining of temporal things. Can he that ſows no Seed, expect a Harveſt? or that plants no Vineyard, expect a Vintage? Can a Merchant hope for rich Returns from a foreign Countrey, without trading thither? And 'tis as vain to hope for the eternal Reward, without following Holineſs.

neſs. The Preſumption is heightened and more fatal, when any ſhall think, if they are predeſtinated to Glory, they ſhall obtain it without their beſt Diligence in making *their Calling and Election ſure.* This is to make a diametrical Oppoſition between the Decrees of God, and the Record of his Will in the Goſpel. Election is a Chain that reaches from Heaven to Earth, to draw Men from Earth to Heaven: It has intermediate Links that muſt not be left out. Between Election and Glorification the Faith and Obedience of the Goſpel intervenes: The Apoſtle informs us, *that we are choſen to Salvation, through the Sanctification of the Spirit and the Belief of the Truth.* The Decrees of God are a ſecret we cannot dive into. We can diſcover what is ſecret only by what is revealed; our Election by our effectual Calling, which

is the infallible and ſenſible Effect of it. To lie down ſecurely in the ſecret Decree, neglecting to *work out our own Salvation*, is ſuch pernicious Sophiſtry, as can only be inſpired from the Father of Lies. If ever ſuch a Thought is ſuggeſted, That if I am elected, I ſhall be happy though careleſs of my Duty, chain it up, there is Folly and Frenzy in it. Heaven is beſtowed as a Gift of his infinite Grace and Power, but according to the wiſe and immutable Order ſet down in the Goſpel; which is ſo far from leſſening and obſcuring the Glory of his Mercy, that it makes it more conſpicuous: For Holineſs, to which we are ſo ſtrictly obliged as preparatory for Heaven, is our moſt Divine Perfection, and qualifies us for the Enjoyment of God.

2. The Excellence of the Reward is to be conſidered: *He that ſerves me, him will my Father honour.*

nour. Such is the Wiſdom and Equity of God in his moral Government, that he has by a graceful Order annexed Honour as the Reward to Vertue. The general Rule is, *Thoſe that honour me, I will honour; and thoſe that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* There is ſuch a Majeſtick Beauty in Holineſs as commands the Eſteem and Affections of Men, unleſs they are prodigiouſly degenerate and corrupted by their Luſts. The Heathens were convinc'd that Honour is the extrinſick Tribute always due to Vertue; and ſome were ſo ſtrict and had ſuch Divine Thoughts as to maintain that Vertue is the only true Nobility. 'Tis foretold in Scripture, *The righteous ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance*: They leave an honourable Evidence of their Graces and Vertues in their Works, and are of precious memory, *when the Name of the Wicked*

ked ſhall rot. But the Reward our Saviour promiſes, is *the Honour that comes from God only*: And as his Majeſty infinitely tranſcends all Earthly Principalities; ſo in proportion, the Honour that he confers upon his Servants is above all the Titles of Honour, all the ſwelling Praiſes of Men. This Reward is given in the next World. Here the Servants of Chriſt are ſometimes darkened with many Afflictions, and buried in ſad Obſcurity before they are dead; They are the Objects of Scorn and Contempt: St. *Paul* who was an incarnate *Seraphim*, whoſe Zeal in the Service of his Divine Maſter exceeded all the Apoſtles, yet was, as he declares, vilified as the offſcouring of the World. Now ſuch is the excellent Goodneſs of God, that he will certainly in the next Life reward with the higheſt Honour all who have advanced his Honour. The

The Honour and Glory of the future ſtate is concealed at preſent, 'tis wrapt up in a Cloud; only ſome glimmerings of it glance upon our Eyes: *Light is ſowed for the Righteous*, the plenary Revelation is hereafter. 'Tis true the Apoſtle tells us, *that Life and Immortality are brought to Light through the Goſpel:* But that is only to be underſtood of a Comparative Revelation, to what was under the Law: 'Tis brought to the Light of Faith, which is like to Break of Day, when the Shadows of the Earth and the Light of Heaven are mixt. There is a Veil between us and the Glory of Heaven, partly to try our Faith, whether we will believe the Promiſe of God without ſenſible Diſcoveries of it; and to try the ſincerity of our Love, whether we love God for Himſelf, without the diſtinct unfolding of that excellent Glory: and to comply with the weakneſs whilſt

whilſt we are in ſuch temper'd Tabernacles of Fleſh. If the Beams of his Glory were diſplay'd before our Eyes, we ſhould be ſtruck with blindneſs, as *Saul* was at the brightneſs of Chriſt's appearing to him: The Flood of Light would ſwallow us up in Extaſy and Amazement. Our faint Faculties cannot ſuſtain his Glorious Preſence. As God told *Moſes*, *No Man can ſee my Face and live.* St. *John* tells Believers, *Now we are the Sons of God*, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: *Now our Names are written in the Book of Life*, in the Rolls of Eternity; now we are Adopted into the Line of Heaven; now we are cloathed with the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the Royal Purple Robe dyed in his Blood; we have the Priviledges of the juſtified State; we have a Right to the Eternal Kingdom by our Saviour's Purchaſe,

chaſe, and the firm Covenant of Grace; we have the Holy *Spirit of Promiſe*, who is *the earneſt of our Inheritance, and the Seal of God's Love to us:* But the full partaking of that Glory is reſerved till we leave this viſible World.

I will briefly glance at the ſeveral Degrees of the Reward that ſhall be conferred upon all whom *the King of Glory delights to honour in the next World.*

1. The Scripture reveals, that *the Souls of juſt Men* firſt *come to the perfection of Glory.* If *Adam* had continued in his holy State after a ſhort Immortality upon Earth, he had been tranſlated Alive, and entire in Soul and Body, to Heaven: The everlaſting Doors had been opened wide for his Reception: But ſince our Diſobedience, tho our Guilt be pardoned, the Gate is ſo ſtrait that the groſs Spoils of our Fleſh muſt be left behind us. Now immediately

diately upon the diſſolution of the Saints, God ſends a Guard of Angels, his moſt noble Creatures, to convoy their Souls into *the Courts of his Honour*, into the Chamber of his glorious Preſence. Divine Dignity! This is the priviledg of his choſen Friends and Favourites, of the moſt illuſtrious and bleſſed Creatures. In Heaven the Divine Majeſty is ſeen in its Glory: And if one Ray of it, reflecting upon Suffering *Stephen*, adorn'd him with Angelical Glory, how much more will the Face of God moſt radiant and reſplendent transform the Soul into an admirable Similitude of his Perfections? *When we ſhall ſee him as he is, we ſhall be like him*, by his everliving Spirit, the principle of the Divine Life and Beauty in the Soul, as the Soul is of the natural Life and Beauty in the Body. There will remain no ſhadow of Error in the Mind, no mixture of Evil

Evil in the Will, no Pollution in the Affections, but the full Likeneſs of God in Holineſs and Joy. This is the higheſt Honour an immortal Spirit is capable of. The State of Innocence wherein Man was created is call'd *a State of Honour:* The Angels are dignified with the Title of Saints: And God is *glorious in Holineſs*: It follows therefore, when *the Spirits of juſt Men are made perfect* they partake of the Heavenly and Divine Honour. If the Joy that ſprings from believing whilſt we are in this Vale of Tears be *unſpeakable and full of Glory*, how glorious is the Joy that ſprings from the cleareſt Sight and the moſt intimate Fruition of the bleſſed God, the Joy that is without defect or end? as the Pſalmiſt expreſſes, *In thy Preſence is fulneſs of Joy, at thy right Hand are Pleaſures for evermore.*

At

2. At the last day their Bodies shall be raised and refined to a Spiritual Excellency, and transformed into the Likeness of Christ's glorious Body. The Apostle declares, That the Consummation of the Saints Glory shall be at Christ's Appearance. Then their Souls shall be reinvested with shining Robes of Immortality: They shall be placed at the right Hand of the everlasting King, which implies the highest Honour; as God's being at our right Hand, implies Protection and Defence: They shall then receive a most glorious Testimony of his Acceptance, *Well done, good and faithful Servants, enter into your Master's Joy:* After they are approved, they shall sit upon Thrones, and judg the the World, even the Prince of Darkness with all his Apostate Trains; they shall give their solemn Suffrages to the Judgment pro-

Col. 3.

pronounced by our Saviour, ſaying, *Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his Judgments.* And after the laſt Act of his Regal Office, our Saviour will lead them into the Kingdom of his Glory to reign with him for ever and ever. Who is able to unfold this excellent Glory? all Humane Words are unworthy and too narrow to expreſs it; only the lively and raviſhing Experience of that Glory can fully reveal it to us. The meaneſt Saint in that Kingdom ſhines in Glory that infinitely exceeds all the moſt ſolemn and magnificent Repreſentations of Earthly Majeſty, all the Trophies and Triumphs of the moſt famous Conquerors. To raiſe our Thoughts by a diſtinct Compariſon of them, conſider,

The Glory of Saints is ſubſtantial and ſolid, 'tis inherent in them. The Apoſtle ſays, *'Tis a Glory that ſhall be revealed in us*: A plenary Infuſion of all glorious Endowments both in Soul and Body ſhall conform us to the Son of God. The Glory of this World is but an aiery Opinion, a verbal Sound without Subſtance, empty Titles, external Appearance, and confers no real Dignity to the Perſon that receives it. There is no Greatneſs in worldly Honour: 'Tis Fancy heightens ſome by compariſon with thoſe that are below them. But Heaven is the Kingdom of true Glory, and every Saint there is truly glorious. The Pſalmiſt declares God's Judgment of all the Honour and Proſperity of the World: *As a Dream when one awakes, ſo O Lord, when thou awakeſt thou wilt deſtroy their Image.*

They

They are painted Shadows, ſplendid Toyes. What difference there is between the clear and ſound Judgment of a Perſon throughly awake, and the vain fugitive Fancies of one that dreams, there is, and much more between the ſwelling Images of Worldly Honour, and the real Heavenly Honour of the Saints.

The Heavenly Glory brings entire Satisfaction. *As for me,* ſaith *David, I will behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy Likeneſs.* When the Morning of Glory ariſes, and the Soul awakes from the heavy Eye-Lids of Fleſh, and ſees the King of Spirits in his Beauty, and the Impreſſion of the Divine Excellencies conſpicuous in it ſelf, what a joyful Satisfaction, as ſweet as Life, is diffuſed through all its Powers? What a Heavenly Sabbath compoſes all

its vaſt and reſtleſs Deſires? The Glorified Saint ſings with the Pſalmiſt, *Return to thy Reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with thee.* But how unſatisfactory is all ſecular Greatneſs and Honour? Of this we have the fulleſt Teſtimony from ſome who aſcended to the top of Worldly Glory: *Solomon* whoſe calm and flouriſhing State was ſcarce ever parallel'd, yet declares that all was *Vanity:* And the *Roman* Triumphs, wherein the World was repreſented in its higheſt Glory, was but an empty Shew: *Veſpaſian* the Emperor in his triumphant way often reflected upon his Folly in being induc'd to ſuffer ſuch a tedious Vanity. 'Tis true the dreaming Minds of Men are deceived with vain complacence in it for a while, and this makes them unwilling to be convinc'd of their fooliſh prizing it;

it; yet they cannot find any ſolid true Satisfaction: They are charm'd with a ſuperficial Pleaſure, that cannot reach to the Center of the Soul.

Nam ut mens per diem veris viſionibus avocatur ne dormiat, ita falſis nocte ne excitetur. *Lactant. de Opific. Dei. c.* 18.

To ſum up all, The Honour of the Servants of Chriſt is Eternal: They will ſhine like the Stars, that never faint in their Watches and Influences, with a durable Glory. But the Glory of this World, like a blaze in Straw, preſently vaniſhes: Not one Ray of ſecular Glory ſhall enlighten the higheſt Monarchs, in the ſhady Valley of Death, nor in the Regions of Darkneſs beyond it.

The proper and main uſe of what has been ſpoken, is,

1. To direct our Ambitious Deſires and Endeavours to ſeek Heavenly Honour. Nature has inſtilled the Deſire of Praiſe and

Glory: And this is like ſome Plants that in their native Soil have a poyſonous Quality, but tranſplanted into another Soil and Climate, are not only innocent, but healthful. Pride ruines both Worlds: The Angels were expelled from Heaven, and *Adam* from Paradiſe for their Pride. And ever ſince 'tis a ſeminal Sin productive of innumerable Evils and Miſchiefs: *Pride of Life is one of the great Corrupters in the World*: 'Tis the cauſe of Envy and Emulation: Of Envy that would degrade thoſe that are above; of Emulation that urges thoſe who are below by any guilty means to aſcend higher: 'Tis one of the great Deſtroyers of Men here and hereafter. The Affectation of the Praiſe of Men makes ſo many aſhamed *of the Goſpel of Chriſt*, of owning its Truths, or ſubjecting themſelves

to

to its pure Rules. This Account is given of the Infidelity of ſome in our Saviour's time, *they ſought the Honour of Men, and not the Honour that comes from God only.* But let the Deſire of Glory be conſecrated, let our Aſpirings be tranſported to a new and heavenly Object, to the Incorruptible Crown, and 'tis a Saintly Ambition becoming the Breaſt of a Chriſtian. The changing of the Object will be an excellent means to rectify our inordinate Deſire of Honour, of what is pompous and ſpecious in this World. There is ſome Reſemblance in curing the Diſeaſes of the Mind, and thoſe of the Body. A Diſeaſe is not only cured by what is manifeſtly contrary, but ſometimes by what ſeems like to it, yet has a ſecret Contrariety. The feveriſh Heat is not only ſpent by cooling Julips, but by Cordials that fortifie the natural Heat that

conſumes thoſe Humours that are the inflamable Matter which foments the Fever. Thus the ſenſual Deſire of worldly Honour is extinguiſhed by a pure Æthereal Affection, the Deſire of that Honour that comes from the God of Glory, who is the abſolute and eternal Fountain of Honour.

2. Let us be effectually excited our ſelves to chooſe Chriſt for our Maſter, and devote our ſelves to his Service for ever. Tho his Dominion is Supreme, and his Right in us unalienable, yet he will be glorified by our free Obedience. Our Reſolution and Conſent to ſerve him, that it may be acceptaple, muſt be deliberate, intire, and everlaſting.

1. Deliberate from the Conviction and Senſe of our Duty and Intereſt: For the Ignorance and Deception of the Mind, the ſuddain Surpriſal of the Will is contrary to that clear Conſent that

that is requiſite to eſtabliſh a Covenant.

There is a Competition between the Son of God, and the God of this World, who ſhall reign over us: One we muſt ſerve: 'tis therefore our higheſt Wiſdom to chooſe a gracious Maſter, and moſt juſt to ſerve him who by full Right may claim due Service. If with free Judgment we ponder things, if our carnal Senſes and Paſſions have not the deciſive Vote, we ſhall readily yield our ſelves to Chriſt, who by ſo many dear Titles has a Right in us: *For to this end Chriſt dyed, and roſe, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.* He *is the true Vine* that left *his Sweetneſs, the good Olive that left his Fatneſs to reign over us*; and ſhall we chooſe the Bramble to domineer? He requires our Service not for his Profit, but that his Love and Boun-

Bounty may take a riſe to reward us: But Satan will torment them moſt who are moſt obſequious to him: And what Charm, what Impreſſion upon the human mind can induce us to prefer a Murderer before our Saviour?

2. Our Conſent muſt be intire, without exception againſt any of his Laws, or his Providential Will, and any Reſervation of our own Luſts and Appetites. He has told us, *No Man can ſerve two Maſters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other.* The Commands of Chriſt and Satan are abſolutely inconſiſtent: Obedience to the one is direct Rebellion againſt the other. We may not capitulate with him, and think by ſome good Works to compound for our Exorbitancies, and that ſtrictneſs in ſome Duties will excuſe our

our Indulgence of ſome Sins: He will not accept of bankrupt Obedience, but ſtrictly requires the payment of ſincere Obedience to all his Commands.

The Apoſtle expreſſes our univerſal Duty in active and paſſive Obedience to Chriſt; *None of us liveth to himſelf, no Man dyeth to himſelf; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we dye, we dye unto the Lord, whether therefore we live or dye, we are the Lords:* That is, our Lives muſt be employed in his Service, and our Deaths be at his Order and Diſpoſal. Is the external acknowledging of him, and a ſpecious Homage worthy his moſt precious Sufferings? Can his Death excuſe our Diſobedience? Can his Sufferings that purchas'd his Dominion to Rule us, procure a Licence for us to rebel againſt his Commands? Such a Thought is Blaſphemy.

And

And our Conſent muſt be entire; that is, we muſt ſerve him with all the freedom and force of our internal Faculties, with all the diligence of our outward Members, with all poſſible induſtry to advance his Glory. 'Tis not the empty Title of Lord, nor the performing ſome ſlight Obſervances that will pleaſe Chriſt. The Commands of the Goſpel frequently urge us to be fervent in our Heavenly Calling, *Firſt ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteouſneſs thereof: Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate: Take the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence: Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: Abound in the Work of the Lord: Be rich in good Works: Add to Faith Vertue, to Vertue Knowledg,* and every Grace in degrees of Eminence: *Give all Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure: We muſt walk circumſpectly and exactly becoming*

coming the Dignity and Purity of our high and holy Calling. We have many Duties to perform, many Sins to ſubdue and mortify, many Graces to perfect, and the moſt intent application of Mind, the moſt zealous induſtry is requiſite for ſuch great Ends. By Diligence and Culture our Souls will be as fruitful Gardens abounding *in the Fruits of Righteouſneſs*; but if we are remiſs and careleſs, they will be barren as the Sands of *Africa*. We ſhould with as much Zeal and Vigour ſerve Chriſt as ever we ſerved our Luſts, thoſe imperious Exactors of our Time, and Strength, and Affections. 'Tis the Proportion St. *Paul* enforces, *As you have yielded your Members Servants and Weapons to Uncleanneſs, ſo yield your Members Weapons and Servants of Righteouſneſs.*

But how many that have made a Trade of Sin, are as careleſs in Re-

Religion as if it were a ſlight Recreation? How many pleaſe themſelves with a Mediocrity in Religion, and pretend if they be but ſaved, they are content: They do not aſpire to excellent degrees of Glory, nor to higher degrees in the favour of God, and are luke-warm and remiſs in his Service, preſuming what they do will be ſufficient to ſecure their Souls: But was ever any Perſon ſo deſerted of Reaſon, that in Worldly Trade when he might gain a hundred Pounds he is contented with ten? Beſides this Diſpoſition and Language is of one that principally deſires Heaven, to eſcape Hell: and all that he does Religiouſly is the effect of ſervile Fear, which is no Saving Grace: For were it not for the terrible Puniſhment, ſuch a Perſon would ſecurely commit the Sin. Briefly, as the Lord Chriſt *has ſav'd us to the uttermoſt*, we ſhould

ſhould ſerve him to the uttermoſt: We ſhould with ſuch Alacrity and Diligence, with ſuch willing Hearts and Earneſtneſs ſerve him on Earth as he is ſerved in Heaven: If we had the Powers of the Angels, yet our Service would be ſhort of our Obligations.

3. Our Service of Chriſt muſt be upon firm Principles and permanent Reaſons to our Lives end. Sometimes there are Deſires and Reſolutions kindled in the Breaſt, and the Carnal Paſſions blow ſo violently as to quench them. Like ſome Curſed Women, that by violent Potions deſtroy the living Conception in their Bowels. Others in the Sunſhine of Proſperity will adhere in Profeſſion to Chriſt, but when Storms ariſe, they withdraw themſelves. Others *begin in the Spirit*, run well for a time, but *end in the Fleſh*. Our Saviour has ſpoke the doom of all ſuch, *No Man having put his*

Quæ in ipſis viſceribus, medicaments epotis Originem futuri hominis extinguunt & paricidium faciant antequam pariant. *Minuc. Fel.*

his Hand to the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God: He is not worthy the Honour of being Christ's Servant, and he will quickly find the fearful Consequences of Christ's Rejection in the next World. We read of *Shimei*, that upon *Solomon*'s confining him to *Jerusalem*, with the threatning of Death if he went forth: *And* Shimei *said to the King, The Saying is good: As my Lord the King hath said, thy Servant will do.* What an easy Confinement was it to remain in the Holy City, where all the Tribes came twice a Year, and when they returned left their Hearts behind them: It seems to be a Priviledg and Favour rather than a Punishment. Yet a petty Interest drew him out, and for the Violation of his Promise he lost his Life. This is a representation of those who for Temporal Respects desert the Service of Christ, violate their Pro-

1 King. 2. 38.

Promiſes to him, and leave the New *Jeruſalem*, the City of the Living God. Our Saviour will accept of none into his Service but upon his own Terms; *Whoever will be my Diſciple, let him take up his Croſs and follow me.* Who would not be ambitious to be the Copy of ſuch a Divine Original? We ſhould rejoyce if call'd forth to ſharp Tryals for his Name, as having an occaſion to give the cleareſt Teſtimony of our Superlative Love and intire Fidelity to our Bleſſed Lord.

To conclude the Argument, Let us be perſuaded to dedicate our ſelves wholly to the Service of Chriſt, and to live according to our Dedication. This ſhould be the early act of the reaſonable Creature; for is it equal to put him off with the Reliques of the World to whom the Firſt-Fruits, the beſt of all we are and have is due? But if we have been careleſs

of our Duty, let us not any longer defer to make a voluntary Conſecration of our Lives to his Glory: Remember that Life is but a *Spans breadth*, our opportunity of ſerving Chriſt is ſhort, and the omiſſion of it is irreparable. What is there to recommend a Service to us, but is to be found in the Service of Chriſt? 'Tis the moſt honourable Service, whether we conſider the Divine Majeſty of our Maſter, who is *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*: The Quality of our Fellow-Servants, the Angels of Light, and the Glorified Saints, who are the Princes of his Court, and the Heavenly Nobility: And the nature of the Work that is ſublime and excellent, becoming an Intellectual Soul, that is Spiritual by Nature, and Divine by Grace.

'Tis the moſt ſweet and eaſy Service: This will ſeem incredible to thoſe who judg of the Delights of

of the Spirit by the Principles of the Fleſh. In this Senſe alſo, the *Carnal Man underſtands not the things of the Spirit:* Who can diſcover the Pleaſure of Muſick to one that was born Deaf? or deſcribe the Light of the Sun to one that was ever Blind? who can ſee a Taſte? The Truth is, the Life of Carnal Men has the appearance of Joy, but not the reality: And the Life of the Saints has a gloomy Melancholly appearance, but has an inward cordial Joy incomparably above all the vain flaſhy Delights of the World. A Carnal Man *that ſerves divers Luſts and Pleaſures*, is ſometimes rack'd and vex'd betwixt contrary Paſſions. Every Luſt has a ſecret Sting with its Honey. And as the corrupt Heart is its own Tempter, ſo the guilty Conſcience is its own Tormenter. Beſides the fearful apprehenſion of what ſhall follow in the next World, when the re-

Juſſiſti Domino ſic & eſt, ut pœna ſit ſibi omnis inordinatus animus. *Aug.*

venging Juſtice of God, and the cruel Malice of Satan ſhall concur to make the Sinner miſerable, is ſufficient to poyſon the ſweeteſt Pleaſures of Sin. But the Life of a Saint is regulated by a Law that is always at Union in its Precepts. He has Divine Aſſiſtance to enable him to perform it. His gracious Maſter will pardon his Infirmities. The Content of Conſcience, the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, that rewards our Duty here, far exceeds all the Severity and Difficulty that the Carnal Nature complains of in obeying the Divine Law. *The Yoke of Chriſt is* truly *eaſy*, and *his Burthen* truly *light*.

His Service is the moſt profitable: He will protect, maintain, and everlaſtingly reward his Servants. Is there any Maſter ſo rich, ſo liberal, ſo faithful as Chriſt? How often do the Slaves of the World complain that they have ſpent themſelves in vain? As *Jacob*

cob reproached *Laban, Thou haſt deceived me, and changed my Wages ten times*; ſo may the Worldlings ſay, whoſe Hopes have been often charm'd with the ſpecious Promiſes of the World, and deluded in the end. Dear bought Experience at laſt convinces them of their woful Folly, in ſeeking for Happineſs where it was not to be found, and neglecting to ſeek it where it was. But the Servants of Chriſt have at the preſent *their Fruit unto Holineſs, and in the end everlaſting Life.* The Service of Chriſt here, is Freedom, Victory, Empire, and hereafter a triumphant Felicity.

I ſhall now addreſs my ſelf to the preſent Occaſion, which is to pay our laſt ſolemn Reſpects to the Memory of the Reverend Dr. *Thomas Jacomb*: who was ſo univerſally known, eſteem'd, and beloved in this City, that his Name is a noble and laſting Elo-

gy. I ſhall not give an account of the time he ſpent in *Cambridg*, where he was Fellow of *Trinity Colledg*, and worthily eſteemed in that flouriſhing Society: But confine my Diſcourſe to his Miniſtry in *London*. Here the Divine Providence diſpoſed him into the Family of a Right Honourable Perſon, to whom he was deſervedly very acceptable, and whoſe real and moſt noble Favours conferred upon him, were only to be equalled by his grateful and high Reſpects, and his conſtant Care to promote ſerious Religion in her Family.

He was a Servant of Chriſt in the moſt peculiar and ſacred Relation: And he was true to his Title, both in his Doctrine and in his Life. He was an excellent Preacher of the Goſpel, and had a happy Art of conveying Saving-Truths into the Minds and Hearts of Men.

He

He did not entertain his Hearers with Curioſities, but with Spiritual Food: He diſpens'd the Bread of Life, whoſe vital Sweetneſs and nouriſhing Vertue is both productive and preſervative of the Life of Souls. He preach'd *Chriſt Crucified, our only Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption.* His great deſign was to convince Sinners of their abſolute want of Chriſt, that with flaming Affections they might come to him, and *from his Fulneſs receive Divine Grace.* This is to water the Tree at the Root, whereby it becomes flouriſhing and fruitful; whereas the laying down of Moral Rules for the exerciſe of Vertue, and ſubduing vicious Affections, without directing Men to derive Spiritual Strength, by Prayer, and in the uſe of Divine Ordinances, from the Mediator the Fountain of all Grace, and without repreſenting his Love as the moſt pow-

erful motive and Obligation to Obedience, is but pure Philoſophy, and the higheſt effect of it is but unregenerate Morality. In ſhort, his Sermons were clear, and ſolid, and affectionate. He dipp'd his Words in his Soul, in warm Affections, and breath'd a Holy Fire into the Breaſts of his Hearers: Of this many ſerious and judicious Perſons can give Teſtimony who ſo long attended upon his Miniſtry with delight and profit.

His conſtant Diligence in the Service of Chriſt, was becoming his Zeal for the Glory of his Maſter, and his Love to the Souls of Men. He preach'd thrice a Week whilſt he had Opportunity and Strength. He eſteemed his labour in his ſacred Office both his higheſt Honour and his Pleaſure.

At the firſt appearance of an Ulcer in his Mouth, which he was told to be Cancerous, he was obſerved

ſerved to be not much concerned about it, than as it was likely to hinder his Preaching that was his delightful Work: and when he enjoyed Eaſe, and after waſting Sickneſs, was reſtor'd to ſome degrees of Strength, he joyfully return'd to his Duty. Nay, when his Pains were tolerable, Preaching was his beſt Anodyne when others fail'd: And after his Preaching, the reflection upon the Divine Goodneſs that enabled him for the diſcharge of the Service, was a great relief of his Pains.

His Life was ſuitable to his Holy Profeſſion. His Sermons were Printed in a fair and lively Character in his Converſation. He was an *Example to Believers, in Word, in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.*

He was of a ſtaid Mind, and temperate Paſſions, and moderate in Counſels. In the managing of

of Affairs of Concernment, he was not vehement and confident, not impoſing and over-bearing, but was receptive of Advice and yielding to Reaſon.

His compaſſionate Charity and Beneficence was very conſpicuous amongſt his other Graces. His Heart was given to God, and his relieving beneficent Hand to the living Images of God, whoſe preſſing wants he reſented with tender Affections, and was very inſtrumental for their Supplies.

And as his Life ſo his Death adorn'd the Goſpel, which was ſo exemplary to others, and ſo gracious and comfortable to himſelf. The Words of Men leaving the World make uſually the deepeſt Impreſſions, being ſpoken moſt feelingly, and with leaſt Affectation. Death reveals the Secrets of Mens Hearts: And the Teſtimony that dying Saints give, how gracious a Maſter they have ſerved,

ved, how ſweet his Service has been to their Souls, has a mighty Influence upon thoſe about them. Now the Deportment and Expreſſions of this Servant of Chriſt in his long languiſhing Condition, were ſo holy and heavenly, that though his Life has been very uſeful, yet he more glorified God dying than living.

When he was ſummoned by painful Sickneſs, his firſt Work was to yield himſelf with reſigned Submiſſion to the Will of God. When a dear Friend of his firſt viſited him; he ſaid, *I am in the uſe of Means, but I think my appointed time is come, that I muſt dye: If my Life might be ſerviceable to convert or build up one Soul, I ſhould be content to live, but if God hath no work for me to do, here I am, let him do with me as he pleaſeth: But to be with Chriſt is beſt of all.* Another time he told the ſame Perſon, *That now it was viſible*

ſible it was a determined caſe, God would not hear the Prayer, to bleſs the means of his Recovery, therefore deſired his Friend to be willing to reſign him to God, ſaying, *It will not be long before we meet in Heaven, never to part more, and there we ſhall be perfectly happy, there neither your Doubts and Fears, nor my Pains and Sorrows ſhall follow us, nor our Sins, which is beſt of all.* After a long continuance in his languiſhing Condition without any ſenſible Alteration, being asked how he did, he replied, *I lie here, but get no ground for Heaven or Earth:* Upon which one ſaid, *Yes in your Preparations for Heaven, O yes* ſaid he, *there I ſenſibly get ground I bleſs God.*

An humble Submiſſion to the Divine Pleaſure was the habitual Frame of his Soul: Like a Dye that thrown high or low, always falls upon its Square: thus whethe hope of his Recovery were

raiſed

raiſed or ſunk, he was content in every Diſpenſation of Providence.

His Patience under ſharp and continuing Pains was admirable. The moſt difficult part of a Chriſtian's Duty, the ſublimeſt degree of Holineſs upon Earth, is to bear tormenting Pains with a meek and quiet Spirit. Then *Faith is made perfect in Works*: and this was eminently verified in his long Trial. His Pains were very ſevere, proceeding from a cancerous Humour, that ſpread it ſelf in his Joynts, and preyed upon the tendereſt Membranes, the moſt ſenſible Parts, yet his Patience was invincible. How many reſtleſs Nights did he paſs through without the leaſt murmuring or Reluctancy of Spirit.

He patiently ſuffered very grievous things *through Chriſt that ſtrengthned him*; and in his moſt afflicted Condition was thankful.

But

But what Diſeaſe or Death could diſturb the bleſſed Compoſure of his Soul, which *was kept by the Peace of God that paſſes all Underſtanding.* Such was the Divine Mercy, he had no Anxieties about his future State, but a comfortable Aſſurance of the favour of God, and his Title to the Eternal Inheritance.

He had a ſubſtantial double Joy, in the reflection upon his Life ſpent in the faithful Service of Chriſt, and the Proſpect of a bleſſed Eternity ready to receive him. This made him long to be above. He ſaid with ſome Regret, *Death flies from me, I make no haſte to my Father's Houſe.* But the wiſe and gracious God, *having tried his faithful Servant, gave him the Crown of Life, which he hath promiſed to thoſe that love him.* His Body, that poor Relick of Frailty, is committed in truſt to the Grave, *His Soul ſees the Face of God in Righ-*

Righteouſneſs, and is ſatisfied with his Likeneſs.

The Hope of this ſhould allay the Sorrows of his deareſt Friends. When the Perſons we love and have lived with, are to be abſent a few Months, it is grievous, but at the laſt lamenting Separation, all the Springs of our tender Affections are opened, and Sorrows are ready to overwhelm us. But the ſtedfaſt Belief of the Divine World, and that our Friends are ſafely arrived thither, is able to ſupport our fainting Spirits, and refreſh all our Sorrows. The truth is, we have reaſon to lay to heart the Diſpleaſure of God, and our own Loſs, when his faithful Miniſters are taken away. When the Holy Lights of Heaven are Eclips'd, it portends ſad Things: When the Saints are removed from Earth to Heaven, their Souls freed from the interpoſition of their dark Bodies,

dies, they truly live, but we that remain, dye, being deprived of their Holy Lives, their Examples, that are a preſervative from the Contagion of the World. A due Senſe of God's afflicting Providence is becoming us: But always allayed with hope of our being ſhortly reunited with our deareſt Friends for ever in the better World. O that our ſerious Preparations, our lively Hopes, and the Preſence of the great Comforter in our Souls, may encourage us moſt willingly to leave this lower World, ſo full of Temptations and Trouble, to aſcend into the World Above, where perfect Peace, full Joy, and the moſt excellent Glory are in Conjunction for ever.

FINIS.